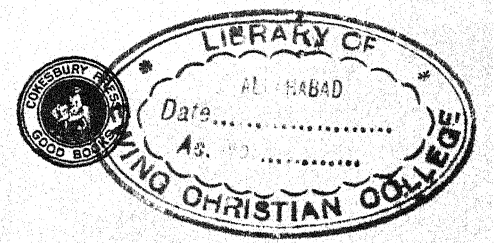
SPIRITUAL ADVENTURES IN SOCIAL RELATIONS

By

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TO

E. M. M.

WHOSE KNOWLEDGE OF THE SPIRITUAL LAWS
OF HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS HAS BEEN
PROVED TO THOUSANDS

FOREWORD

IT is not easy to adjust oneself to other human beings. They throng about us more closely in these modern days when transportation and the growth of cities, towns, and colleges bring the pressure of thousands upon us. The world has become so small, and so close to our elbows, that we must discover the laws and principles of living with others, if we are to have peace and gain rather than lose by human contacts.

These studies of the principal relationships each of us has to face are based on the spiritual laws that will lead to victory and power during our short sojourn on earth. Each human relation is measured by the teachings and life of Jesus, who was the greatest specialist in contacts with people, and lifted each person who came near him into a larger and more challenging experience. The future peace of the world rests largely on the way in which modern youth, who are to bear the burdens of the future, face and apply these spiritual laws in all their human dealings. The influence of even a group of such devoted followers of Jesus's way of life could affect wide areas on human thought.

The material of these studies is so arranged

that it can be used for group discussion or personal study. For class work it is wise to center on the questions that are suggested by the Bible studies, using the general discussion for supplemental material. The writer is conscious of the fact that many other phases of the subject might be discussed, but the chapters have been written in the hope that a quest for greater adventures in social relationships may grow out of these discussions.

The author gratefully acknowledges the permission granted by Richard R. Smith, Inc., to use the splendid and revealing translations of the Bible by Dr. James Moffatt. Much new light is thrown on the Old Testament, and the New Testament is brought closely home to us by the simplicity and directness of the translation. It would help greatly in the discussion if this Moffatt Bible were used for all study and reference work.

Although many important expressions of human relationships have had to be omitted, these studies are submitted to the youth of our Churches in the hope that new insight into the resources of the Spirit may be discovered and the power of Jesus may be better understood and appropriated for daily living. B. C.

New York City, October 1, 1930.

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"The law of the Spirit brings the life which is in Christ Jesus, and that law has set me free from the law of sin and death."

—*From St. Paul's Letter to the Romans.*

CHAPTER I

THE INNER MEANING OF HUMAN RELATIONS

"LIFE? What does it mean?" Thus the eternal quest is voiced by youth and age these modern days. For some, life consists of an endless round of outer experiences, bringing new thrills and constant changes. "It's a great life if you don't weaken," shouts overwrought youth. But the look in their eyes gives telltale witness to their disillusionment.

For others, life's meaning is wrapped up in the success with which material possessions are acquired. To heap up a pile of riches which frees one from all necessity for work and brings independence from all responsibilities, would seem to give time for a full discovery of life's possibilities. But the secret escapes these people. While they were hugging their possessions their souls died—and the quiet searching words of Jesus echo their despair. "A man's life consisteth *not* in the abundance of the things that he possesseth."

The real meaning of life is to be found in personal relations. These are two: our relation to God and our relation to human beings. This

is the essence of the difference between persons and animals. We have a capacity for infinite life in relationship to other life which no other member of the animal kingdom possesses. It is in this fact that the full meaning of life lies hidden. It is not so simple as it seems; for there never was a day when these relations have been so confused and complex. God is not the comprehendible personality he seemed to be to our forefathers. He now pervades an intricate universe which staggers us with its immensity and our childlike idea of deity seems almost absurd to students to-day who are measuring the stars in their courses and who are bewildered by the unthinkable reaches of scientific discovery. There is a great and new discovery to be made of God, the Father of our spirits, which transcends our deepest understanding of personal relationship. The world, too, is so accessible to all of us through ships, airplanes, cables, and radio that human relations are not simple. They require new understanding and a largeness of heart that many of us never dreamed of needing. Our family, our friends, our schoolmates, our small-town neighbors are only the first syllable of the first word in the long treatise of human life. We can never exhaust the possibilities of adventure in social relations.

The infinite personality of God can be understood in part when we realize that of all the millions of human lives on this earth no two are alike. Each is a unique expression of God's creative power, and each reveals something different from all the others. If we could come to know intimately all the men, women, and children living now, we could get the fullest understanding of what the mind of God is like. "In him we live, and move, and have our being," says St. Paul, and every human spirit is another gleam of the mind of God. Since this is so, it is difficult to understand why so many people prefer to be intensely local in their desires and seem to have no ambition to widen the circle of human relations. Their family and a few friends complete their horizon. They do not care to see anything beyond. Physical laziness grips them, and they lose the joy of stretching and growing up to the stature of a man who finds immortality in this life and can look to the world beyond with no shrinking because of its vast spaces. Such people will feel lost in heaven because they have been afraid of a spacious experience in human relations here.

One of the gifts of wide human relations is vision. Without this no true greatness is possible. Education, spiritual reality, business suc-

cess, come to those who see beyond their noses and seek inspiration and new ideas outside of themselves. We need the varied points of view of the multitude of minds before we can judge truly of the worth of anything. Power to think comes from catching the ideas of others, thus widening the reach of our own brain. It is the experience of others that gives us power to steer in straight paths to the goal of our desire. Our wisdom widens as we add to our own the wisdom of many others. This is not only true in affairs of business and education, but is also true in the realm of religion. We have our own small local idea of God and the spiritual life, and then suddenly some experience brings us face to face with great discoveries made by other minds, and our little mental viewpoint is upset by the avalanche of wisdom we have ignored. Instead of facing it, we draw back in fear and are disturbed all our days by the bigness of vision we refuse to face. Instead of a greater God and a greater faith, we resent everything that does not tally with our nearsighted vision. We find ourselves saying, as the old Quaker once said, "The whole world is queer, Rachel, except thee and me; and sometimes I think thee is also a little queer."

Human relations help us in creative living.

There are big careers awaiting us which need the help of thousands of others before we can achieve greatness. We build a modern house and imagine we have done the work. We forget it took hundreds of people to help us build. The foresters and millmen who prepared the lumber, the workers who quarried the stone, the hundreds of men who helped make the paint and nails; other hundreds who researched and perfected electric fixtures and household machinery. Every bit of creative work means the thinking, the abilities, the wide intelligence, the energy of countless people. No one of us can achieve by himself. We are enmeshed in a radiating mass of life that affects us at every turn—influencing, helping, turning us aside, inspiring us onward. "No man liveth to himself." "It is not good for man to be alone."

Vision and power for creative living are great reasons why we should widen out our human relations, but they are not the greatest. There is another challenge of supreme importance. It concerns our growth in the life of love. How can we love without people to love? What is love? It is more than the response of the heart to beauty and pleasure. It is more than the sex desire which urges us to find our life mate. It is more than our personal desires and ambi-

tions. It is the rhythm of the universe because it is the rhythm of the heart of God. It is the desire to reach out in comradeship and self-giving to all who walk the path of life with us. It values others above oneself—and so loves that it lives to give and give and give. The love that reaches out to God and to people is the bridge into immortal life. It creates oneness with God and others. Love unlocks human hearts, abolishes time and space, and never dies. Jesus said that all of life could be fulfilled by this one principle of love for God and love for our neighbor. It is the greatest creative force in the world. Love calls out all the possibilities of life. We rise to almost impossible heights when love challenges us. It has the strange power for uniting dissimilar lives into oneness. All differences melt away under the spell of mutual devotion. Perfect understanding comes and oneness of purpose—without love, loneliness, despair, blindness of heart, separation, hatred, and the breaking away from life are the universal experience of young and old.

To live a life of love is not easy. It means the deliberate putting to death of all the animal urges within us which seek everything for selfish gain and pleasure. All self-will has to die, and

we have to lose our life in others in order to find it. We lose our self-seeking, our egotism, our desire to grasp. We live to understand, to appreciate, to help others. It is not easy. It is a life of daily discipline and saying no to the primitive instincts within us.

We know that the life of love is the true way to oneness with God and people, and to our own highest attainment because the only life in which it was worked out perfectly is the only life which dazzles the world even now with its radiancy after more than nineteen hundred years. Jesus broke through mortal life and death through a love for others which led him to give himself utterly to others. To-day he is not only the heart of the Church; he has become the goal and ideal of all the world. He not only lived the highest life of love, but said to all the world, "This is my commandment, that ye love one another *as I have* loved you."

Love is a quality of heart that grows the way a capacity for music grows by daily practice. We may love music and long to play a sonata, but no one can attain that power without years of training the fingers to respond to the spirit of the composer. To long to love is one thing, but to attain the life of love is quite another. It is

more than worth the daily effort because it opens the heart of all the world to us; it opens the way for all creative living, and it is the outward and visible evidence of the fact that we have gained the spirit of an eternal life that neither death nor sorrow can thwart. As John Oxenham writes in his "Sacrament of Love":

"Love to all loveliness is kin;
Love molds all life—without, within;
Love is the mightiest power on earth;
Love to eternal hope gives birth.
Love—the Beginning and the End—
All life and death doth comprehend.
Love lived in death upon the tree;
Love lives again for you and me—
Love through eternity endures,
For God is love,
And love is God.
Thank God for love—His first—then yours."

For Study and Discussion

One of the most interesting characters in the Old Testament is David. In him we see all the red-blooded qualities of a man in that pioneer period of civilization where war, polygamy, and the low moral standards of that ancient day were dominant. David was a man of that century, and yet in him were certain qualities that set him apart from others. Those qualities of spirit were

what rose to perfection in our Lord, and from the human side David became the progenitor of the human body of Jesus, because these rare qualities of spirit shown in his relationships were the highest in any human heart and were immortal and were able to lift him up above the carnal and animalistic characteristics of ordinary man.

> The Eternal said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature; I have passed him by, for the Eternal does not see as man sees; man looks at the outward appearance, but the Eternal looks at the heart." Then Jesse called Abinadab, and put him before Samuel; but he said, "The Eternal has not chosen this one either." . . . Jesse made seven of his sons walk past Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The Eternal has not chosen these." . . . He answered, "There is still the youngest, but he is a shepherd with the flock." "Send and fetch him," said Samuel; "we must not sit down to our banquet till he is here." Jesse sent and brought him in; he was ruddy, a lad with fine eyes, and of a handsome appearance. And the Eternal said, "Go and anoint him; this is the man!" So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him among his brothers; and from that day onward the spirit of the Eternal inspired David strongly.
>
> —1 SAMUEL 16: 7, 8, 10-13.

> David used to go to and fro, attending Saul and pasturing his father's sheep at Bethlehem.
>
> —1 SAMUEL 17: 15.

Store up treasures for yourselves in heaven, where neither moth nor rust corrode, where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure lies, your heart will lie there too. The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your Eye is generous, the whole of your body will be illumined, but if your Eye is selfish, the whole of your body will be darkened. And if your very light turns dark, then—what a darkness it is! No one can serve two masters: either he will hate one and love the other, or else he will stand by the one and despise the other—you cannot serve both God and mammon. —MATTHEW 6: 20-24.

I once estimated Christ by what is external, I no longer estimate him thus. There is a new creation whenever a man comes to be in Christ; what is old is gone, the new has come.

—2 CORINTHIANS 5: 16, 17.

What were the characteristics of the boy David in his life as a shepherd that prepared him for a king? How can one estimate character by the eyes? How do eyes reflect evil character? Why is this a true test of the quality of spirit? What were the hazards a shepherd had to meet in the olden days? What qualities of spirit could such a life then and now develop? How could faith in God be won from the fears of the night and loneliness in the hills when tending the flock? What is the value of a character which both serves the

king and his father? In what way was this worked out in the life of Jesus?

How do we meet the challenge of the two masters of to-day? In what way is this responsible for our failure to conquer? What is the new creation within? How does it show itself? If we are to follow Jesus only, what tests in daily life are likely to come to us? If after a time our friends discover the new attitude and place us in the higher class of those devoted to higher laws, are we truly willing to be different from ordinary folk?

Dear Father, who dost speak to Thy children in a still, small voice, lead us into the place of silence where we may hear Thee and find Thee in the stillness of our inner life. Teach us the effect of loving others as Jesus loved them. Open our eyes to see the spiritual riches that flow from a life that is one with Thee and with all humanity. Cleanse our hearts from insincerity, self-seeking, and pride, and help us to become teachable little children with the burning desire to please Thee and to work out the radiant destiny Thou hast for us. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

CHAPTER II

THE SPIRITUAL SECRET OF IDEAL RELATIONSHIP

THE life of self-forgetting love rather than the love of self-indulging life is the secret of all ideal relations in business, family, politics, and religion. The average boy and girl may shrug indifferent shoulders and say that such a statement is sentimental but not practical. It is not easy to realize that the power behind the things we see is unseen and mysterious. No one yet really understands electricity, and yet its embodiment in material shape, bringing heat, light, or motion, is of highest value to daily life. Unseen X rays reveal what is hidden. Personal influence, that mysterious quality of personality, pulls men together in powerful groups for all sorts of achievement. The life of self-forgetting love which was the motor power in the personality of Jesus made him the supreme human influence of all ages, so that even time itself is dated before and since his life.

The history of man through the ages shows that human beings were meant to be self-con-

scious, free individuals, who win freedom by increasing control over their circumstances and environment and by a multiplicity of relationships; as one of the great biologists puts it. Jesus had this perfect freedom. He knew the secret laws of triumphant living, and his love for human relationships included every living being on earth. No one ever attained this save Jesus. Therefore if we want really to be free, one would better reckon with the current of power that made him what he is. If we think about it, we may discover the biggest force in life.

Human nature does not take kindly to a life of self-forgetting love. It cuts across the grain of all the instincts and impulses we have inherited. "What is the use of being strong," we say, "if we can't grasp what we want? What is the use of all these intense desires if we cannot satisfy them? Why have ambition and thirst for power to get wealth and pleasure if we cannot have it as well as others?" How silly, we say, to cut ourselves off from pleasures that are a part of human life. Was not Jesus a mistaken idealist to go against normal human desires? Red-blooded youth is asking these questions seriously. What is the answer?

Just as man is higher than the animals, so is

Jesus higher than man. Human beings control animals because we have mental powers higher than theirs. They often have physical strength greater than ours, but our mental strength, which is an invisible power, conquers their physical brawn and muscle. Jesus had all the power of human beings plus a greater power: the power of his spirit. He conquered human weaknesses by spiritual forces. He said that we too could have this power if we wanted it enough to qualify for it. No one can understand it until he has the experience. Then its practical values are revealed.

This adventure for spiritual power, which is the secret of all radiant human relations, depends on certain conditions. The conditions are stated clearly in the teachings of Jesus. They are like a series of steps up to a higher level. Each step requires a decision to mount up with all one's strength. The first step is to become a little child. To realize that there are big experiences and untold wisdom about which we know nothing helps us to be humble and teachable. If we are conceited and think we know it all, the biggest secrets in life will never be ours. "Except you turn and become as a little child," says Jesus, "you cannot see the kingdom of heaven." Are

we willing to face ourselves squarely and own up to ourselves that we have only a microscopic bit of knowledge and are gladly willing to learn from every one who has something to contribute to us? If we face this issue honestly, we can lift ourselves to the second step.

The next step is that we seek with all our heart and determination for this spiritual power. It is not enough to talk about it and think about it. We must start out on a real adventure to discover it. "If you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him." The asking means cooperation in the search. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." A boy seeks an education. God gives him a mind and sound body, but men have to work with him to make education possible. His parents relieve the boy of struggle for daily bread by working themselves so as to give him leisure. Other men who have worked hard put the results of their work, which is their money, into schools and teachers' salaries. Others work hard to produce textbooks. But the chief burden comes on the boy who must work days and nights and years to absorb the

education. It takes seeking and pushing with all one's might to find the goal of desire. "Genius," said a wise man, "is ninety per cent perspiration." In the same way a life of self-forgetting love is only wrested moment by moment from a world full of lures and appetites and urges toward selfishness. Many give up the fight because it is so hard; but he who overcomes the enemy finds himself full of a power that draws multitudes to him.

The picture of the enemies that have to be fought to the death are all listed by Paul, the great victor in world-wide relationships who won out in the fight. In his letter to the Galatians he writes: "The passion of the flesh is against the Spirit, and the passion of the Spirit is against the flesh—the two are at issue, so that you are not free to do as you please. . . . Now the deeds of the flesh are quite obvious, such as sexual vice, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, magic, quarrels, dissension, jealousy, temper, rivalry, factions, party-spirit, envy [murder], drinking bouts, revelry, and the like; . . . people who indulge in such practices will never inherit the Realm of God. But the harvest of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, good temper, kindliness, generosity, fidelity, gentleness, self-control" (Moffatt Translation).

As we look at the forces of self-indulgence and then recall the daily newspaper tragedies we see without further argument that these enemies Paul lines up are those which smash up all ideal relations with people. The list of qualities that are in self-forgetting love are the only ones which produce lasting friendships and human joy. There is no other way. The life of self-indulgence leads to the death of health, freedom, and love. Its end is disease, loneliness, prison, and multitudes of enemies. Long ago Epictetus said, "No man is free who cannot command himself." The end of a self-forgetting love is self-control, a victory which wins the admiration of the world. It is more than worth the struggle.

But some one is sure to say, "Why do I have all these desires if they were not to be satisfied by self-expression?" Herein lies a secret. Every one of us is a blend of two elements: flesh and spirit. The flesh is the lower plane of life, through which all the animal urges of our past inheritance reach us. The spirit is the plane of the mind and personality which is capable of relationships with other personalities and with God. We can choose which we will follow. If we choose the lower plane, we are haunted by the protests of our higher life which keeps us un-

happy. If we choose the higher plane, we command our lower life to serve the interests of lasting relationships and develop a personality of infinite powers for growth and joy in life. We grow by keeping our lower life under our feet and stepping up to higher levels where there is clearer air and wider horizon. Spurgeon once said, "Many men owe the grandeur of their lives to their tremendous difficulties." Self-expression wastes power and ends in defeat. Self-realization conserves powers and ends in the thrilling joy of victory. A gardener was once cutting off many buds from chrysanthemum plants. A visitor protested and said, "Why not give these buds a chance to flower?" The wise gardener smiled and said, "I am making top flowers." Then the visitor saw the reason why buds were cut off. They were those that grew out of the sides of the stem. By cutting them off the strength of the plant went into the making of a great top flower that would bring a big price for its beauty. If the small buds had expressed themselves in small flowers, there would never have been the top flower by which the plant came to its self-realization.

Life is only thrilling as it holds out big ideals beyond our present reach. "I charge thee throw

not away thy hero in thy soul," writes the philosopher Nietzsche. "The people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits," said the Hebrew prophet. The name "Hero" awaits each of us who dares to wear the sword of the Spirit of Jesus!

For Study and Discussion

The true spirit of love cares so much for the loved one that nothing is too hard to undertake for his welfare. It is selflessness opposed to selfishness. There is no greater power in the world than self-forgetting love. It lies at the base of all immortal relationships and is the center of the heart of God. When Jesus gave himself willingly to a cruel death for the sake of humanity, whom he loved, he released the most magnetic and most vital force in the universe which has an actual quality. Love is the bridge between the mortal and the immortal life. It is the one spirit that can triumph over earthly and selfish urges.

> I keep the Eternal at all times before me; with him so close, I cannot fail. And so my heart and soul rejoice, my body rests secure; for thou never wilt let me sink to death, nor leave thy loyal one to the grave; thou wilt reveal the path of life, to the full

joy of thy presence, to the bliss of being close to thee forever. —PSALM OF DAVID 16: 8-11.

I may speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but if I have no love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal; I may prophesy, fathom all mysteries and secret lore, I may have such absolute faith that I can move the hills from their place, but if I have no love, I count for nothing; I may distribute all I possess in charity, I may give up my body to be burnt, but if I have no love, I make nothing of it. Love is very patient, very kind. Love knows no jealousy; love makes no parade, gives itself no airs, is never rude, never selfish, never irritated, never resentful; love is never glad when others go wrong, love is gladdened by goodness, always slow to expose, always eager to believe the best, always hopeful, always patient. Love never disappears.
—1 CORINTHIANS 13: 1-8.

I give you a new command, to love one another—as I have loved you, you are to love one another.
—WORDS OF JESUS: John 16: 34.

List the qualities of love and see their relation to the adventure of living together with others. What evils can be directly traced to the lack of these qualities? Why is it difficult to have true love? What in ourselves prevents the growth of its spirit? How was this love which David discovered in God the secret of his success and freedom from fear? What purposes for us can

we deduce from the fact that God loves us? What difference does it make in our attitude toward life if we know these possibilities are ours? Does it make it easier to love? What kind of relationship did the love of Jesus for human beings bring to him? Is there any chance for social fastidiousness if we love as Jesus loved? What is the only way in which we can handle evil companions? How can we keep ourselves unscathed from them? What are the protective shields we should carry when we are among those whom we cannot trust? On what occasions did Jesus withdraw from the people? See John 6: 15, Luke 4: 28-31, Luke 8: 34-37, and other instances. When are relationships impossible?

Father of love, who didst make us for Thyself to live with Thee in eternal fellowship, give us grace to carry out Thy purpose in all our relationships. Teach us the inner secret of the love that cannot fail; help us to love others as we long to have Thee love us. Teach us the power and joy of oneness with Thee and others that we may follow the steps of Jesus Christ our Lord, who loved us to the end. Through Him, whose we are and whom we serve. Amen.

CHAPTER III

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FAMILY

FAMILY life is the first experience we have with a social group. It is typical of the wider life of our town, State, nation, and world. God meant us to have close relationships with others because every human being born on earth is one of a group of at least three—father, mother, child. Therefore it is against the law of the universe for anyone to consider only himself and ignore the common responsibility for the life of the group. No one of us lives to himself. Each member of the group is dependent upon the others. The child is helpless in his dependence upon father and mother when he first comes into life, but later on father and mother become dependent on the child. It is give and take all through life. If we learn the principles of the highest way of life with the close family group, then we are able to live successfully and victoriously in the other larger groups of people.

There are social values of great importance to our spiritual life transmitted through the right kind of family life. The reason why we do not

realize them is because so much of modern family life breaks every principle of God until it naturally disintegrates and falls apart, leaving bitterness and cynicism in the heart of every member. It is not hopeless if only one member discerns these divine laws and puts them back into the family group again by the power of his influence. How much sorrow we would be spared if we followed God's methods of living together instead of our own selfishness! If some one, reading these pages, feels that family life has been a failure, the chances are that he, most of all, will see the value of the right way of living and be able to establish a family of his own. In this way he faces facts and does not leave all to mere chance. Every boy ought to look at a girl as a partner in the spiritual methods of living together before he decides to marry. Also every girl should test every boy to see whether he is willing to follow the way that leads to life and peace before she joins her future to his. Let us face frankly the spiritual laws that make for family oneness and enable us to live at our best wherever we go in life.

The basis of all family peace is self-forgetting love. Just because we are born into a group of at least three, each of us has two others to think

about besides himself. It is against the law of the cosmos to be selfish and to consider only ourselves. Every day there are countless ways in which each member can live this out in our care for others, until it becomes the habit of our life to give instead of grab. The boy who thinks of the family before himself is the man who can be trusted to be at the head of a corporation, or State. The world trusts and honors the man who holds office ever mindful of the good of the community rather than to take advantage of it for his own profit. Such people are so rare these days in business and political offices that most people are cynical and long for true leaders. A leader is a person who is at his best; and his best in a group means self-forgetting concern for others.

In the family, every one has a chance to grow in wisdom and initiative. The little child lives with father and mother, who pass on to it in daily teaching their knowledge and experience in life. Because they love the child better than themselves they shield it from dangers and teach it wisdom; what to avoid and what to follow. The family life is also a laboratory where the child can see the parent working out a demonstration of these truths, and can also have the

thrill of doing some creative work himself suited to his years and strength. Through this each of us grows in ability and knowledge until we are old enough to be trusted to handle the forces of life outside the home.

The spiritual responsibility of fitting a child to live victoriously in the world ought to turn every young man and woman to the task of getting as much education and general skill in handling themselves before they dare to start a family life. Jesus said that it was better that we should have a millstone around our neck and be drowned in the sea than to cause one of these little ones to stumble. As we look about us today it is heartbreaking to see how many boys and girls have never had what God meant them to have in their homes. If this is true, we can see to it that we do not let any child of ours repeat our experience.

The small community which a home represents has common interests that are the concern of each member. The support of the family, its education, the family surroundings that make for health, friendship, and the satisfying of our personalities are necessary and our common task. All the family were meant to contribute to each and each to all. The most important factor in

all this is the character of the parents. When God gave his Son to live a human life on earth, he did not select a rich home or a highly educated mother. He selected Mary because, as the angel told her, "Thou hast found favor with God." This could not have been true unless her heart was true and loving and sincere and willing to follow God's guidance. Joseph, too, is described as "a righteous man," one who obeyed God's word and did not shrink from honest work. Wealth and comforts are nothing compared with the riches of such qualities of heart as Mary and Joseph had. Selfishness and willfulness could not find a place in such hearts. They lived for others instead of themselves. Happy indeed is the child that has such a mother or a father!

Family life as God meant it to be gives every member perfect freedom because of the spirit of perfect trust that comes when others love us better than themselves. With whom do we feel free to speak and act and live our natural life? Only with those who love us so unselfishly that we find no suspicion or restraint in our heart. We do our best work and find our fullest happiness and freedom in the presence of those who love us with a love that never exploits us. God intended family life to be a little taste of heaven

on earth. Just as flowers blossom and grow in the sunshine, so we were meant to respond to the warmth and beauty of love. When we see suspicious and handicapped men and women we can infer that their home life was not centered in God's way of life.

Another social value of the family comes through the common culture and background that is passed on to us from those who were our forbears. The germ plasm that transmits life to us has within it all the character of past generations who passed on their virtues or vices to us. It is a solemn thought that what we do in life will affect the character of our children and grandchildren. In the second commandment this law is stated that the sins of the father pass down to the third and fourth generation, and those who love and obey God pass on that spiritual life to thousands. Let us therefore guard what we do because of its effect on others whom we long to help and not to hinder. Many a child is born blind or diseased for life because of the sensual sins of father or mother. In the same way the beauty and health of a child reflect the spiritual life of its ancestors. Such children have a long running start over others who are handicapped through no fault of their own. A back-

ground of culture and clean living is the inherited wealth that counts.

We are all persons in the making. We do not yet know what our true growth shall be. A personality is our inner self that thinks, and feels, and wills to do. If we are taught to think high thoughts in family life, and to appreciate beauty, and feel reverence and sympathy, and learn to achieve skill in the duties and opportunities of home, we shall grow a strong personality. A life sheltered by unselfish love grows more rapidly and powerfully than one surrounded by strife and selfishness. God has a high purpose for each life he sends into the world. We sin against him when we thwart the growth of one of his little ones.

In every family there are problems to meet. We are not all ideal nor do we follow Jesus's way of life perfectly; therefore we have to meet obstacles of our own creating. One of these is the problem of domination. Some strong-willed member of the family may insist on making all the decisions for each member. He may ignore the tastes, the temperament, and the ideals of the others and thus block all individual development. The best way to meet this is to have a family council each week and speak out frank-

ly the varied points of view and the differing desires, and come to a decision that will be for the best good of the group. If we are willing to consider honestly the differences of opinion among us and change our desires for the good of all, we will discover something better than any one member has thought out, and the united effort of all will bring greater happiness. On the other hand, if some one of the family insists on his way in everything, the bonds of loyalty will snap as the children grow up, and long years of unhappy relations will be inevitable. "In a multitude of counselors there is safety," runs the wisdom of the Old Testament, and it is a true method for happy unity in any family.

There is also the problem of jealousy to be met in a home. No two members of a family are alike, and each was sent here to work out a different career; to realize the purpose God had in his heart when he sent the human spirit down to live on earth. Sometimes a methodical boy resents the sparkling genius of some artistic brother, or a girl feels that her sister is socially more acceptable than she is and grows bitter toward her. Sometimes a mother is jealous of a beautiful daughter or a father envious of a son. There is only one way to meet this. Each of us

must try to be just himself or herself and remember that God had some unique place for each of us to fill. The chief task of each of us is to find out what our special gift is and develop that to the full. As long as we look on others and envy their gifts we are blind to our own and lose our individuality. We need to reverence our life and develop every power within us for the work we are meant to do. If we have the love of Jesus which cares for others more than one's self, and is self-forgetting, we can rise to the beauty of life that the Master had. It is not physical beauty or mental cleverness, but beauty and strength of the inner spirit that wins the real triumph in life.

It is often difficult to live one's own life and express the unique ability God has given us. It is often taken for granted that a child must follow the career of his father or mother without reckoning with the fact that another destiny is shaping his end. One of the greatest responsibilities of life is to discover the special purpose God has for each of us and to work it out. Many lives are unhappy failures because this has never been faced. We follow the crowd and do what others are doing regardless of our peculiar gifts. The family life is the place to try out our powers

and discover our creative gifts. The wise family will encourage this search and help with its sympathy rather than try to control the career of each according to past tradition.

It is difficult to determine how far self-expression in family life should go and when self-denial should be practiced. Both are necessary for a strong life. Self-expression should be encouraged when it leads to creative living, to originality, and is a result of an impulse for service to others. If it means waste of powers and a defiance of moral laws and an exploitation of the personality of others, self-denial should be practiced. Herein lies the difference between freedom and a license which hinders the highest welfare of others. In the close relations of the family life we have the task of living ourselves and letting others live; of a freedom that is also unselfishness. If we can find this happy mean in our home life, we are fitted for influence and power in the great world outside. The family is the world in miniature; the place God has ordained as the testing field in which to know ourselves. To fail here is to fail everywhere.

For Study and Discussion

It has taken many centuries to develop the ideal

of the family which is the purpose of God. A man and woman made one in spirit, mind, and body were meant to be the human picture of the heart of God, and to share his creative power in children born and brought up and integrated around the central unity of father and mother, in which strength, tenderness, and wisdom are blended. There are certain families where the ideal of God has reached a high standard. They are the inspiration for all their friends. In other cases where the ideal has been rejected, a flood of sorrow, disappointment, and broken ideals has overshadowed parents, children, and often grandchildren. A family life is God's greatest gift if it fulfills the spiritual laws, or it may be the most devastating experience of life if these laws are ignored. We do well to study the facts carefully in relation to God's teaching.

> Honor your father and your mother, that you may have a long life in the land which the Eternal, your God is giving you. —EXODUS 20: 12.

> We who are strong ought to bear the burdens that the weak make for themselves and us. We are not to please ourselves. Each of us must please his neighbor, doing him good by building up his faith. Christ certainly did not please himself.
>
> —ROMANS 15: 1-3.

Do not vex God's Holy Spirit, by whom you have been sealed for the day of redemption. Drop all bitter feeling and passion and anger and clamoring and the insults, together with all malice; be kind to each other, be tender-hearted, be generous to each other as God has been generous to you in Christ.
—EPHESIANS 4: 30-32.

I long by night and day to see you again. That would fill me with joy, for I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice as it dwells (I feel sure) in yourself. Hence I would remind you to rekindle the divine gift. —2 TIMOTHY 1: 4-6.

Then he (Jesus) went down along with them to Nazaret, and did as they told him. His mother treasured up everything in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man. —LUKE 2: 51, 52.

What are the advantages of a group over the individual who is alone? Does freedom mean separation from the wisdom of others? In a family where wise and ignorant are mingled, what is the responsibility of parents? In what ways do parents fail in this? What should be the common ideals of family life in order to insure unity and happiness? Picture an ideal family where each individual has full chance for highest development. Let each member of the group com-

pare his description with others to discover the composite ideal. Jesus had thirty years of family life and only three years of public life. What did he gain from family life that made those long years important? What is the difference between a home and a house where a family group live? What spiritual ideals ought every family to differentiate it from the animal plane?

Our Father, through whom every family on earth comes into life, teach us the reality of a fatherhood and motherhood that is like to Thine. Help us to make Thee real to our little ones through our daily life; and help them into a child-like relationship with Thee through their life with us. May eager, self-forgetting love be the atmosphere of our home life so that Thy peace and a spirit of perfect trust may be ours. May oneness and the sheltering strength of those we love keep us from straying and lead us in paths of victory and abundant life. May our home be one in which Jesus Christ loves to dwell. Through His Name. Amen.

CHAPTER IV

RELATIONSHIP WITH A FRIEND

FRIENDSHIP is the sympathetic response to the real character of our inner self. Like responds to like. "As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man," runs the Hebrew proverb. It is said of a certain Chinese school in China that every student as he comes into the school each morning walks toward a large mirror in the corridor. It is placed there so that each boy may get a full reflection of himself and see himself as he is in expression and posture and as others see him. Thus he realizes the attitudes of mind and body that need improvement and is spurred on to higher aspiration.

One of the best ways toward a true understanding of ourselves is to take some time to be alone and let all our friends pass in review before our mind. As they come vividly before us let us ask ourselves the searching question, "To which of my companions does my inner heart respond in spontaneous eagerness, and what is it in them that calls forth that response? Which of them are most like what my heart instinctively desires?"

Write down the answers plainly and then analyze their true character. If we do this honestly, we shall get an accurate description of ourselves. We are truly known by the response we make to certain qualities which color our relationships. "Birds of a feather flock together," is a true saying. It is so easy to fool ourselves and pretend that we are what we are not. An honest looking into the mirror of our friendships may give us a shock that will bring us face to face with truth.

Our friends make us more of what we are already. The Proverbs of Solomon read, "Mix with wise men and you will be wise, but a companion of fools will come to grief." (Prov. 13: 20, Moffatt Translation.) A coal from the fireplace may go out if left alone, but if it unites with another coal, a conflagration may come. Mere association with people does not necessarily mean friendship. We can walk in the midst of those whom we do not want to be like and wear armor that will protect us from evil influence. One of the most beautiful thoughts that comes from God was given to the prophet Zechariah to describe God's protecting care: "For I, the Eternal, declare, I will be a wall of fire all round her, and, for splendor, I will be within her." That is what actually happens when we are bent on keeping

our hearts pure and clean in the sight of God. The fire of the spirit of purity burns so brightly that it surrounds like a wall of fire and never goes out because it is supplied by the glory within, which comes from God, who uses our bodies as his temple.

Have you never known of some people whose presence made riotous souls embarrassed and silent? It is no fairy tale when we read about Moses coming down among the people after he had been up in Mount Sinai communing with God. We read, "His face was in a glow after speaking to God," and the result among the Israelites, who had been worshiping a golden calf and following their lower desires, was entirely natural. When they saw Moses' face "they were afraid to come near him." Thus the real influence of one soul on another is conditioned by that to which the heart responds. If it unites with God, it draws other spiritually-minded folk and disperses evil minds. If it shuns God's company, it draws to it the spirits who love darkness rather than light.

In an address the speaker once asked, "Why is it that the godly are so inhuman, and the human are so ungodly?" It is one of the tragedies of human life. Many people profess religion and

godliness when at heart they love and practice the inhuman life. And all of us know ungodly people who make no professions of religion and yet surpass the godly in human kindness. The world loves a genuine human being who has the friendly heart which hastens to help. It is not religion that makes people inhuman; but they are the kind of people our Lord meant when he told us to beware of them. "They come to you with the garb of sheep, but at heart they are ravenous wolves." It is a tribute to the influence of religion that even inhuman hearts want to imitate it. Imitation, as has been said, is the sincerest flattery. Therefore the reality of friendship which is the swift intuition and response to the inner spirit of the heart is a sure test of our own real heart and the heart of others.

There are certain indications of the spirit of those whom we dare not respond to in friendship. Many young people to-day feel that the spiritual life is unprofitable when they see so many irreligious people who get on in apparent ease. They have existed in every generation. They are rich and full of vigor, but "vice oozes from their very soul, their minds are rank and riotous." One has only to walk down the main street of any modern town to overhear the speech of many

such. In fact, they are so prominent in social clubs, schools, and business that many youth say: "Be good and you will be lonely." There are many that feel that in these modern days one must go with the crowd and accept their standards or be "socially ostracized." And for many men, and women especially, social ostracism from the modern group would rob them of all joy in living. And so they put a veil over their religious ideals and become "hail fellow, well met" with those who will lead them to ultimate blackness of despair. It takes courage to follow Jesus Christ and his ideals in friendship; but the narrow trail soon widens to a road where sunshine gleams and shouts of joy and gladness greet one at every step. Who dares make the adventure in spiritual friendship in the group where Jesus walks and talks and feasts? This is the time of all times to adventure.

What are the principles that make for friendships that last through life and beckon us on in radiant expectation when they have passed beyond our earthly eyes? What friendships have the glow of eternal light and life on them? There are many principles, but let us call to mind the most basic ones.

First comes truthfulness. I must be able to

look into the eyes of my friend in utter sincerity and without any self-consciousness. Insincere eyes lose their beauty and gleaming transparency and become dull and shifty. Such eyes cannot hold the devotion of a real friend. The shadows of disillusionment fall between two such friends, and sooner or later the bond is broken. The joy and sense of utter freedom and rest that is always the environment of the sincere and truthful relation casts the most fascinating spell over the heart. It is what makes home for the man and wife; it makes freedom and peace for any two friends; and creates spontaneous joy that is not conditioned by social diversions and outside pleasures. It also brings the real unity which no lure in the world can break. Often friendships start out in truthful sincerity, then as time goes on there come periods when it is difficult to meet the test. Then some day two hearts awake to the fact that they have drifted so far apart that there is no hope of ever getting together again. Make truth and utter sincerity the foundation of every relationship, and all the unexpected joys of lasting friendship will be yours!

Another principle that is essential to a spiritual adventure is the spirit of loyalty. This does not mean that we are to be loyally devoted to the

wrong attitudes of heart we may discover in our friend. Perfect truth would forbid that. The loyalty must be a common devotion of each friend to something ideal that is higher than the self-desire and interest of either. For parents it may be a loyalty to the sacred trust of little children, those flowers in God's garden, which he has intrusted to their care and love. Higher than that may be a loyalty to the will of the heavenly Father for their lives; a common devotion to Jesus Christ and his abiding presence "where two or three are gathered together" in his name. For some friends there is a loyalty to some great cause to which they are giving themselves; the loyalty to certain ideals which they share in common. Any relation which holds must have at its heart some such devotion to something outside of self-desire. If there is nothing but physical and personal appeal, it will soon weaken before the oncoming of some other person more distractingly alluring. Therefore let us discover in each friendship the real secret of our loyalty. Then we can know the real strength of the relationship.

No friendship can survive that is based on selfishness. Love is not appetite, but the eager giving of itself for the good of another. Service, self-denial, consideration for the needs of our

friend, willingness to love even if it means suffering and self-sacrifice. These are the eternal marks of true spiritual friendship. Self-forgetting love is the eternal quality of the heart of God as we see it in Jesus Christ.

The spirit of romance ought to be cultivated in all friendship. It is that idealism that keeps life from dullness. We get it by planning for daily small joys that bring lovely memories; by bringing beauty in simple ways into our relationship. Memories of a walk on the hills, the beauty of sunsets, joy in a garden, lovely poetry and books enjoyed together; a flower on a birthday, and the sweet sentiments of letters, lift the heart from sordid temptations. Reticence that lures the heart with the expectancy of joyful discovery is a key to that permanent relish for a friend and develops reverence.

One of the sad sights one often sees are two friends who have not kept pace in growth. One goes on to greater heights of development, and the other has never reached out for higher life during the years. Everything changes in this world and people most of all. We must guard ourselves lest we grow lazy in aspiration. Let us mount the paths of life hand in hand, each spurring the other to new and larger vision. Thus

we may go from strength to strength and from character to character, until we enter together the spacious life of the spirit that awaits us.

For Study and Discussion

Although the family ideals were low and undeveloped in the days of David, his relations with friends set standards far beyond those of most of us to-day. Love was not a sentiment only, but a program of generous dealing. In his relationship with men the spirit of David foreshadowed the perfection that shone from the life of Jesus, who was known as the Son of David. There are countless ways in which King David towered above the people of his time in the quality of friendship which we all need to-day. Our modern ideas of friends are so often based on the value they can be to us in business or society and the influence they can exert in our behalf. To have friends who are such because of the love and common interests which enrich our relationships with life and widen life through mutual give and take is a priceless possession. We do well to follow David and our Lord in their way of life with friends.

And Jonathan said to David, . . . If there is any mischief afoot—may the Eternal kill Jonathan and

worse, if I bring mischief upon you! . . . May the Eternal be with you as he has been with my father! . . . Then Jonathan again swore his oath to David, by his love to him; for he loved him like himself.

—1 SAMUEL 20: 12-17.

Jonathan slain on the field of battle,
my heart is sore for you,
O Jonathan, my brother!
You were my dear delight,
Your love for me was a wonder, far
beyond a woman's love.

—DAVID'S LAMENT: 2 SAMUEL 1: 26.

Then David asked, "Is anyone left of Saul's family, that I may be kind to him for the sake of Jonathan?" . . . Ziba said to the king, "There is a son of Jonathan still alive, who is lame." . . . So King David sent to fetch him. . . . When Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, came to David, he fell on his face and did obeisance. . . . Then David said to him, "Have no fear; I will certainly be kind to you. . . . I will restore to you all the ancestral land of Saul, and you shall always have a place at my table."

—2 SAMUEL 9: 1, 3, 5-7.

I am the good shepherd; a good shepherd lays down his own life for the sheep. The hired man, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, deserts them when he sees the wolf coming; he runs away . . . because he is a hired man, who has no interest in the sheep. . . . This is why my Father loves me, because I lay down my life to take it up again.

—WORDS OF JESUS: JOHN 10: 11-13, 17.

How does a friend differ from an acquaintance? What are some of the laws of friendship that make for permanent relations? Give examples of noted friendships in history and analyze their strength and weakness. Think of the most ideal friendship you have experienced and note the principles that held it true. Can a true friendship be one-sided? If so, what will it do for the one who loves? How does one choose friends? Is it mere attraction or the common devotion to some service, or work, or ideal? In what way is a Christian friendship superior to a merely human relation? How did Jesus Christ show his friendship for people? How can one overcome the lure of self-seeking people who want to use us for their selfish ends?

Our Father, help us to carry in our hearts the remembrance of Christ crucified. As He died that we might live, and live for others, denying Himself; so may we inherit His spirit of self-forgetting love. Thus may we bind ourselves to others and others to us in a friendship that can never die. May every friendship be based on a love that seeketh not its own; that we may be transformed into the image of Him who loved us and gave Himself for us. Amen.

CHAPTER V

RELATIONSHIP WITH THOSE IN AUTHORITY

THE inherent desire to be free souls is a large part of what makes us personalities instead of animals. It is a right desire. King David sang the truth is a Psalm describing man. "Thou hast made him little less than divine, thou hast crowned him with majesty and honor, giving him sway o'er all thy hands have made, with all things underneath his feet—sheep and oxen, all of them, yes, and the wild beasts, birds of the air and fish of the sea—all that swims on the wet sea paths." (Psalm 8: 6-9, Moffatt Translation.) Freedom and power are our human heritage; therefore we do not at once take kindly to those who are in authority over us. Each of us prefers to do what is right in the sight of his own eyes.

Now, if we were like Robinson Crusoe, each living on a desert island, we could be perfectly free so far as the rule of others is concerned; although the man Friday had still to carry out Crusoe's bidding. Therein lies the difficulty. We are not born alike nor equal in powers and wisdom, and, so long as we have to live together by millions and billions on one small planet, we have

to have relations with others and to be dependent on others. We have more human needs than we can supply by our own effort, and we need the help of others to satisfy our desires. Some of us are very young and ignorant of life, and others are wiser and experienced; therefore most of us need both strength and wisdom. So there have grown up, during the ages, many authorities with which we must deal. The experts in wisdom become our authority in education; babies are dependent for life and food on parents; the weak must be protected by the strong. Towns and cities and nations are formed to help one another carry out common ideals. God, too, who made us and controls our breath, controls the universe according to laws which prevent chaos and make perfect development possible.

The free soul is one who discovers these laws and works with them instead of against them. He sits humbly at the feet of those who have wisdom and learns how to get the most out of life. The man who is free to use electricity and get best results is the one who most perfectly obeys the laws of electricity and does not defy them. He then lives in comfort instead of being killed. In other words, freedom comes from working

with the authorities of life instead of *against* them.

There are certain ways in which we can build for the future and get the spiritual growth which we need to become free and powerful. The first need is that we shall be big enough in spirit to see that in every phase of life there are authorities who are such because they know more than we do. The trained cook is the authority of the kitchen; and if we are wise, we recognize it. The head of the school has a world of knowledge which we need before we can do our best work. The leaders of the Church have a wealth of religious experience to share with us, and the government of our town or city provides for our comfort and safety in a better way than we could do if dependent only on ourselves. It is a wise boy or girl who realizes that the few short years of our life are not enough to make it safe for them to ignore the authority of wisdom and experience.

Another attitude of mind is necessary, and that is to see that all life develops by growth; "first the blade, then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear." Sometimes we are like the small child who watched his mother plants bulbs, and then two days later was found digging them up to see if they were growing. Some one has said that this

is the age of the speedometer rather than the compass, and that is why we are so impatient; we seek haste without considering the right direction. No authority on earth was ever perfect in all ways. The main question to ask is whether it is pointed in the right direction and growing that way slowly, it may be, but surely. It is a great art to train oneself to look at the whole trend or growth rather than to see only the one defect we do not like. Every one ought to have a garden in which to learn to respect the laws of growth and to acquire patience.

Another attitude we need is to work with authorities and try to understand their methods. The scientist tries to know all that has been discovered before, and then tries to find the next step to take for new discovery. Most of us are critical without knowing all the facts. We only bleat forth our ignorance. The one on the inside who works in harmony with the authoritative system is the one who makes the wise new suggestions; and the suggestions of such a person are heeded.

There is so much more desire now to get away from the old forms of autocracy and share the responsibilities for the rules of the game of life. Almost every school has a students' council to

work with the faculty. One may express his opinion by letter to the President of the United States; and even in business corporatons, owners and workers confer together on what is for mutual good. The wisest families talk over family problems with the whole group. We face the highest ideals for all authority *if* there is a common desire to govern everything by the law of love that works by the Golden Rule. To put ourselves in the other fellow's place and understand sympathetically his point of view, is the secret of all wise authority. The clashes come when someone or some group want their own way, regardless of others.

The true path of growth and reformation runs toward the goal of the good of all. If we do not keep that goal in sight, we will face revolution instead of reformation. And history shows us that untold suffering results and gives rise to a new kind of autocracy more blind and prejudiced than before. It takes years to find the happy mean between the two extremes. The best way to get reforms is to work for them one at a time, and after each success begin on another. There is nothing that widens our horizon and develops leadership like keeping one's eye on the good of the whole community and seeing things whole

and not in part. The training for this can begin in our own homes when we are young. Instead of shouting out our personal desires, let us train ourselves to ask, "What is best for the whole family?" Then we can apply this as we grow up to the neighborhood, and school, and Church; and then to our business and the whole town, State, and nation. Every game has rules in order to play it; and the game of life has to have its rules and authorities. Even the sun, moon, and stars obey the central authority of God.

There is enough to be done in reforming methods of government to occupy the time of every man and woman, boy and girl. There are so many existing wrongs that ought to be put right. And it is all needed for the public good. Insanitary conditions are permitted in so many towns in sections where the poor live. The "powers that be" consider the rich, but not the poor. Our prisons are inhuman in their treatment and are used for punishment instead of correction and training for better living. Churches often ignore the poor and do not welcome them to services. Old people are neglected or housed in forlorn institutions. People forget the sick and shut-ins and go along their way expecting those in authority to look after them. What a

difference it would make if every boy or girl had a personal interest in righting some social wrong and worked with the governing bodies to bring it about. In one town, where there were many who could not read or write, each one of a group of boys and girls in a Church took one as a pupil. Soon other people became interested, and before the year was gone the town had established a night school for such handicapped people. We never know how far the influence of an act like that may reach.

Jesus Christ, the One who had all freedom and power for this world and the next, said, "I came not to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent me," and he said plainly that only those who do the will of the heavenly Father shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. If the Lord of life said this and obeyed the purposes of God even when it meant suffering and death, there must be something of infinite importance in our being obedient to the highest authority. As we think about it we see that the principle of love that is in the heart of God as the dominant motive for all the world and all people is self-forgetting love, unselfish, and living for the good of others. The only way we can train ourselves in this love is to express it every day in unselfish willingness to

yield to the method and laws of life that are for the good of all. If we always do as we please, we are training ourselves in the spirit of anarchy and selfish indifference to others. This is the real meaning of sin. It is selfishness instead of selflessness. We shout out, "I want money," and if that is our guiding motive, we may steal a purse or murder a man to get it. Sin always forgets the rights and welfare of others and defies authorities.

One writer defines service as love made visible. It is a great definition. The more we can make unselfish love visible in our neighborhood and community by all sorts of social service for those who are being exploited by the influential group in the town, the more quickly can the kingdom of God become a reality on earth.

Our country is said to lead the world in crime and revolt against authority; and the spirit of fear is growing in human hearts. The secret cause is the love of money, which is the root of many kinds of evil, as St. Paul writes. "Money is power," we say—yes, power which makes us independent of others and able to have our way. It is the opposite of service, although some who have acquired money realize the weight of their stewardship and know that they must some day

account for this trust before God. The only way to transform our country is to make service the supreme motive of our life and watch out for daily chances to express it practically. In this way we may help to build up a generation of citizens who will demand that authorities serve truly the good of all. There is no other way.

"But suppose," says some one, "that our authorities are the kind which we cannot respect, suppose they are definitely grabbing for themselves and exploiting the people?" There are such, and they cannot be overthrown at once any more than the followers of Jesus could dethrone Herod Antipas, who ruled during the human life of our Lord. Jesus was content to plant the principle of sacrificial love in the hearts of the people, and he knew it would in the end overturn evil men. We may not be able to respect some of those who are in authority over us, but we can reform things from within by insisting on honesty and the good of the whole.

It is the indifference of the so-called good people to the full application of the law of love in our community that is the most depressing fact. As long as they are living in ease in some exclusive suburb they will not face responsibilities for the coming of Christ's kingdom. They pray glib-

ly, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," and lift not one finger to help God make that petition come true. A group of eleven disciples overturned the world of their day. What could not the millions of Church workers of to-day do if they really lived by the law of self-forgetting love? The religious life of this older generation is steadily losing the respect of youth, which faces facts frankly. The burning question is, "What will youth *do* about the facts they face? Will they make the spiritual and heroic adventure under the authority of Jesus Christ? He waits for us to leave all and follow him.

"To serve the present age,
My calling to fulfill;
O may it all my powers engage,
To do my Master's will."

For Study and Discussion

One of the unusual virtues in David's life in that period of the world was his respect for authority. He did not doubt God's plan for the world or his wisdom about the time when events should unfold. In our time we want everything done at once, regardless of the ravages that are made in human life—we are unwilling to wait. David sensed the great program of God and was

patient under the authority of God and what he permitted. His ambition also led him not only to obey the authority of Saul, who wanted him to amuse him, but to reverence the authority of his home, which involved his shepherding the flocks as was the duty of every youngest son. The confident trust in God and in his father gave him the steadiness and patience that resulted in the honored career that came to him. The completeness of a life always comes from such acknowledgment of power beyond our grasp which works for us at the right moment.

> David and Abishai made their way into the lines by night, and there lay Saul asleep, . . . his spear fixed in the ground at his head, and Abner and the troops lying round him! Then said Abishai to David, "God has put your enemy into your power to-day—do let me pin him to the ground with his own spear!" . . . But David said, . . . The Eternal shall strike him, his day of death shall come, or he shall go into battle and be swept away. The Eternal forbid that I should raise my hand against the Eternal's anointed! But take the spear at his head and the jug of water, and let us be off!" —1 SAMUEL 26: 7-9, 11.

> "Is it right to pay tribute to Cæsar or not?" But he noted their knavery and said to them, "Show me a shilling. Whose likeness and inscription does it bear?" "Cæsar's," they replied. "Well then," he

said to them, "give Cæsar what belongs to Cæsar, give God what belongs to God."

—WORDS OF JESUS: LUKE 20: 22-25.

Submit for the Lord's sake to any human authority; . . . live like free men, only do not make your freedom a pretext for misconduct; live like servants of God. Do honor to all, love the brotherhood, reverence God, honor the emperor. Servants, be submissive to your masters with perfect respect, not simply to those who are kind and reasonable but to the surly as well—for it is a merit when from a sense of God one bears the pain of unjust suffering. —1 PETER 2: 13, 16-19.

Can one really escape from all authority? If one flees from one, what others are likely to control us? Since God has put authority over us in the realm of mind, in the laws of the body, and in the relationships with society, what is the wisest course to follow? How are lives flustrated by impatience with limitations? What is the spiritual secret of winning freedom under authority? Is it weakness or wisdom to submit? Give the reasons. How could the common good of the large social group in town or city be secured without authority? Do duty to God and duty to the directive will of the group need to clash? What is the privilege that each of us has to-day to change laws and leaders? Why is this a spiritual responsibility? What is the advan-

tage of life to-day in its personal and social obligations? How could we widen our influence by working with and for the group? How can we cultivate a sense of social obligation for the spread of spiritual laws for honest and true living?

Our Father, as Thou didst make us little children to grow and learn from day to day, help us to reverence those who can open to us the privileges of living and Thy spiritual secrets. Lead us into the fullness of Thy life and knowledge of Thy laws of victorious living. Give us the humility that is teachable and responsive that we may be like our Christ, who lived Thy life on earth and always did Thy will. Through His Name we come. Amen.

CHAPTER VI

RELATIONSHIP WITH ONE'S CHILD

EVERY child born to-day belongs to to-morrow. He begins where we end. The parents live in the realm of to-day with its characteristic peculiarities and environment. They have to grapple with the tasks and struggles of to-day while their children dream a dreamlike experience, gradually facing one reality after another. When they become adults they will have to face a new world, new tasks, and a new environment. We only need to think of our grandparents in their youth and recall their life as contrasted with our own, merely in its mechanical changes, involving electricity for light, heat, and motion, radio, automobiles, aëroplanes, television, etc., to realize how different life is now from what it was then. In the same way the world in which our children are to live would be mysterious to us if some prophet could describe it.

All this must be kept in mind in all our relationship with children in the house. The permanent riches we can give them is the gift of spiritual insight and experience with spiritual powers

that will give them a more than human power to cope with the developing world so that its perils may be avoided and its possibilities realized. It will take all the spiritual laws of life revealed to us by Jesus to become conquering men and women. Therefore, our relationship with children must be based on our experience with these laws to-day: so that our wisdom may be shared and, best of all, we may be living proofs of the reality of these powers.

The modern situation in which most children find themselves is the result of adult indifference to the issues at stake. The new world has come upon us so suddenly, and our spiritual power has been a tradition rather than a reality, so that hosts of us have folded our hands in helplessness and had no wisdom to give to our children. The child has had to cope with life single-handed: and one of the most pathetic sights on our streets and in our schools to-day is that of children far older than their years, often *blasé* at ten, with all the fresh beauty of youth replaced by the disillusioned lines of strain and experience. The parents of such children have lost their chance to give them what God meant every child to have. The appeal of this discussion, however, may help show these young folk the way to find fullness of life in their

own homes when they marry and begin their family life.

Out of the present chaos emerge three attitudes in the heart of youth which may lead them to a greater victory than their parents ever found. These three are the spirit of frankness, the desire for true freedom, and the insistence on reality. If these attitudes are centered about spiritual triumph as a goal, the world will see the finest generation of human beings ever produced. Such a triumph will depend on the way adults enter into a spiritual adventure with their children for a radiant future goal. Let us discuss the necessary principles for such a victory.

The first attitude we must develop is to realize that this world is teeming with possibilities for growth and distraction: and even though it is God's world and we are his children, we do *not* have a right to everything. The moment we live as though we do have a right to everything, that moment we center on material values rather than spiritual; on luxury that enervates our strength and capacity for discovery; and on a disregard of the rights of others. We are not here as individualists, but as a social group interrelated with the needs of others. A parent once said: "I had to struggle in my youth and want *my* son to have

every advantage." Such an attitude leads a child to selfishness, disregard of others, and dull mediocrity. We only have the right to as much as will develop our latent capacities for growth and creative living. Proper food, an education, a shelter from storm, the inspiration of fine friends, and a chance for creative work are the right of every human being. Beyond these, the so-called "advantages" may be leaden boots that impede our power to live at our best. Blest is the child that has parents who discern and practice this truth.

Another necessary factor is the provision on the part of parents that frankness, freedom, and reality shall be developed through our personal relations with children based on these three attitudes of spirit. In many homes father is so bent on riches that he has no time for such relationship with his children, and mother gives more time to the diversions of some group, the social tyranny of whose hectic program and its responsibilities defrauds her of family companionship. There seems to be no halfway position determined by personal judgment. Most adults are caught in the wheel of business or society and weakly yield their independence and family life. They forget that the supreme joy of middle life and old age depends upon a perfect understanding and coöpera-

tion with children who have always had this from boyhood up. Most of the tragedies of youth come from adventures in life based on the presumption of ignorance rather than the wisdom of experience with the best. Youth gains presumption from other youth, but the wisdom comes from parental love. This means that parents must be ready to reach out in new adventure with their children and not pull back in settled conservatism. The decision should be based on faith in God and knowledge of spiritual laws. Likewise children naturally want the victory of wisdom and not the disasters of ignorance.

True affection has four teammates: work, play, beauty, and worship. Love is not merely an emotion, but is realized in these four ways in family life. Through working together we see the spirit of love applied to everyday life and to all situations and relationships. Some one says, "I love you." But it is not proved until we see it working in all practical living. Play also releases the spirit and shows whether its spontaneous expression reveals a dark-brown, vulgar life, or a pure, radiant, transparent inner soul. Laughter is very revealing. It is a true index of the inner life and shows what sort of things one really loves. When anyone greets the vulgar and

impure with a shout of hilarity, it bespeaks something that will make future relationships untrustworthy.

Love is also eternally wedded to beauty. In our home life the beauty of order, the beauty of cleanliness, the beauty of color and line, the beauty of pictures that call forth lovely imagination, and the beauty of sympathetic relationship make for an atmosphere that brings rest, peace, and a sense of contentment. One of the joyous privileges of companionship with a child lies in helping him to discover beauty in the world and in life. Thus the subconscious mind becomes a storehouse of beautiful memories that flood the mind when the outer experiences are unlovely. To recall the glory and presence of Jesus or a scene of loveliness when one is engaged in a dull task is the secret of victorious living. It is this mystical sense of the unseen which we see clearly in the imagination that helps us to be blind to the downward pull of sordid conditions. God gave us our imagination as a window for our soul so that we might rise above those things that depress and discourage. To cultivate a love of all beauty is like a coat of mail that will protect any child from the darts of the evil in the world.

In the same way worship is an attitude of spirit

that protects us from disaster. To reverence what is pure and holy and beautiful and courageous and unselfishly loving, draws out in us a yearning to be like that which we reverence. A home without worship and reverence for God and his desires is an empty space. A child should never be able to recall a day when the family did not worship. This does not mean necessarily a traditional form, but a linking of God with our life, and a heart of thanksgiving and recognition for him. One boy said that his whole life was changed while visiting a family when on a brilliant and starry night they sat outdoors while the father read aloud the beautiful Psalms describing the glory of God in the heavens. He discovered God's glory and nearness for the first time. There are countless scenes in the life of Christ that would never cease to hold us if we related them to the scenes and circumstances of daily life. There are beautiful prayers expressed in hymn and books that would stretch our minds and enrich our conception of worship. We owe it to the children in our midst to give them this eternal heritage.

One reason why God places little children in the home with adults is for the training of their moral judgment. To be a conquering man or

woman in this complex world one must be trained in the wise use of money, which may be described as "stored-up personality." To use its possibilities for the largest good requires a wide mental and moral horizon which comes from living with those who have developed it. There is also need to think well about the use of time. We are here such a short time, with an eternity of creative living to prepare for, that time must be used to release all our spiritual powers and train us for victory as an athlete trains for the big game. Then there is the use of health: to build up nerve resistance that will last for a lifetime. At present girls are more neglectful of health and reserve strength than boys. Extremes of fashion have reduced countless girls to a susceptibility for disease and with no vitality to pass on to their children. To train for physical efficiency for all strains in life is a serious obligation. That means necessary hours of sleep and right food and time for quiet as well as activity. Parents and children can work together for this great end which will save so much sorrow during the years.

There is a coöperative responsibility in home life that is the secret of happiness. Every child develops powers more rapidily if it has some share in maintaining the home. So often some one

member is the drudge for all the others. This defrauds every one of the true home sense. Even the smallest child can be responsible for something that helps. Through working with parents there is a mutual devotion to ideals that make home life and a sense of pride in accomplishment. It brings oneness into the family groups and trains for idealism and creative living.

In all our relationships with children, the home should be a laboratory for experimental work for the release of hidden powers. Far too many boys and girls come up to college graduation with no ideas about how to use their powers for a life career. It generally comes from a restricted home life in which there has been no safe experimentation for the discovery of hidden capacities. Each child should have the chance to find out what its real genius is before it becomes adult. Parents can furnish many openings during childhood. This takes time and companionship; but what greater glory is there for a parent than to work with God for the unfolding of the divine purpose in the life that has been intrusted to its care? To work together with God in this way may be the means of achieving our highest purpose. God give us courage to carry through!

For Study and Discussion

A child belongs to to-morrow and continues the life of father and mother into the future. Therefore our responsibility to the sensitive new life that comes into our home is very great. One of the first things that a child needs is to find united wisdom and love and standards of living in father and mother. If there are contradictory ideals in this world and no standard that holds for its guidance in immature years, the whole of its outlook on life will be uncertain, and fear and suspicion will replace faith and confidence in a true sense of direction. All children make the mistakes of ignorance, but they should be won back to right conduct through love and understanding instead of blamed for lack of wisdom. Spiritual discernment is close to the heart of a child and should be developed, not dwarfed by neglect. The great safeguard for a child is a love that stands by through better or worse.

> Absalom beguiled the men of Israel. Four years later Absalom said to the king, "Pray let me go to Hebron and pay a vow I made to the Eternal." . . . The king said to him, "Go with my blessing." So Absalom went off to Hebron, sending emissaries all over the clans of Israel with the message, "As soon as you hear the bugle blow, shout, 'Absalom is king at Hebron!'" —2 Samuel 15: 6, 7, 9, 10.

"News for my lord the king. The Eternal this day has avenged you on all who rose against you!" The king said, . . . "Is young Absalom all right?" And the negro answered, "May the enemies of my lord the king and all who rise to harm you fare like that young man!" The king was deeply moved. He wept, . . . and as he wept he cried, "O my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! O that I had died instead of you, Absalom, my son, my son!"

—2 SAMUEL 18: 31-33.

The disciples came and asked Jesus, "Who is greatest in the Realm of heaven?" So he called a child, set it among them, and said, "I tell you truly, unless you turn and become like children, you will never get into the Realm of heaven at all. Whoever humbles himself like this child, he is the greatest in the Realm of heaven; and whoever receives a little child like this for my sake, receives me. But whoever is a hindrance to one of these little ones who believes in me, better for him to have a great millstone hung round his neck and be sunk in the deep sea. . . . See that you do not despise one of these little ones; for I tell you, their angels in heaven always look on the face of my Father in heaven."

—WORDS OF JESUS: MATTHEW 18: 1-6, 10.

What are the advantages of the universal law that a child should enter the world helpless, without conscious knowledge, and more dependent on the parents than the offspring of the animal world? What does the situation indicate as to

the relation of parents to child? What are the chief mistakes parents make in relation to children? What are the chief weaknesses of the children in relation to parents? How would the law of unselfish love work to change usual relations between parents and children? Each individual child is here for a purpose conceived in the heart of God. How can parents help a child to discover that purpose? Why is it wrong to expect children to duplicate the life interest of their parents? What is the wisest method for developing the spiritual consciousness of God and the divine in the life of a child? How can parents enrich the resources of the subconscious mind so that in after years the mind will be thronged with healthy, inspiring memories that will shape into visions for achievement?

Dear Lord, who didst say, "Suffer little children to come to me, and forbid them not," may our heart be open to all little ones who need our help, and wisdom, and companionship. May we never cause our little ones to stumble, but so live in their presence that they may see the reflection of Thy love and serve Thee all their days, that Thou mayest not be disappointed in them or us. In Thy dear Name. Amen.

CHAPTER VII

RELATIONSHIP OF HUSBAND AND WIFE

IT seemed necessary, in order to express fullness of personality, that two types of human being should be created: the male and the female. In this way God widened the horizon of life and expressed one of the basic laws of the universe: relationships. In God "we live and move and have our being," and on earth we develop and realize our powers through relations with other human beings. Thus life is a series of relationships, and every normal man or woman forms a triangle with God and people. The sanest and most highly developed souls are those who maintain this universal principle. Thus, when God made man and woman and gave them, as husband and wife, the life-creating powers in partnership with himself, he brought us into the closest possible relation with him.

This great reality lifts husband and wife above the animal plane into a life where spiritual forces are necessary to bring out the highest capacities of the man and woman. All the wreckage and failure of married life is due to the failure to

embody these higher forces of life in united living. There is endless modern discussion of this problem, and solutions are suggested which ignore these spiritual necessities. Of course, if men and women are determined to live on the lower plane of animal life, these solutions alone can salvage the wreckage or prevent more. There is a plane, however, on which results are possible far beyond what anyone can achieve by himself, if we live according to the principles God meant for us human beings who are destined to become like unto the personality and power of Jesus Christ.

The first spiritual reality in married life is that *love,* and not sex-urge, should be the basis of every union. Our English language is so limited that we use the same word "love" to describe our relation to God, to our mother, to a joy-ride, to our sex life, or to a good meal. What we all need to realize is the true meaning of love, which is the spontaneous expression of a human spirit, which, losing itself for others, as St. Paul says it, "seeketh not its own." The life of Jesus is the perfect picture of true love, the only kind that lives and has the glow of the divine on it. The word "sex-urge" splits soul and body apart and belongs to the realm of inherited instincts; love

transcends it and uses it for the highest spiritual result. Many married people may feel that this is an ideal not possible for them, because they began their relationship without giving themselves wholly to this spiritual law of life. Now it seems hopeless to remake the past and revamp the present. It is for no one wholly impossible, but the greatest achievement is for those young men and women who have not yet made the final decision. For such, the whole of their future life will be victorious if they adopt certain attitudes of mind which grow out of spiritual convictions.

The first of these attitudes is a realization of the sacredness of the human body as the home of their spirit and the highest expression of the creative mind of God. This gives a self-respect and the will not to exploit others or to let themselves be exploited. Our bodies are like treasures to be guarded because of their infinite creative possibilities. We cannot afford to make ourselves cheap for the sake of an experience, or passing pleasure. If we do, we never get away from the haunting remorse of later years which grows into our very soul. Closely akin to this is the recognition of the triangle in life; that two of us are bound closely together only as we are mutually dedicated to something higher outside of ourselves—some

godlike cause, some purpose that calls out the dedication of ourselves, some centering of ourselves in the service and love of our Lord. In his "Philosophy of Loyalty" Professor Royce wrote about the necessity for having some common cause outside of ourselves which holds our mutual devotion. People grow tired of one another when each is to the other the whole horizon. We must see the other in relation to the whole horizon of life with its responsibilities and chances for growth, if we are to love one another permanently. Therefore, before proposing marriage, it is the path of wisdom to see if each has some love higher than mere personal satisfaction and happiness. Measure the size and reach of the spirit before linking up with anyone for life. Beauty fades, wealth flies away, a small soul cramps one like a narrow, close room. Life, the life God means us to live, is spacious as the universe and ever growing and widening. So must our love life be. Nothing less will satisfy us; nothing else will endure.

Any union based on these attitudes of spirit has all the possibilities of happily abundant life opening before it. After marriage there are certain other attitudes that ought to govern the minds of the two personalities who have become

one. The day has passed when the old pagan idea of the woman being the chattel of a man, merely one of his possessions, can live in the light of Christian teaching. "There is no male nor female; . . . all are one in Christ Jesus," writes Paul to the early Christians. Both husband and wife stand side by side in the presence of God, each to reach highest development and work together for the common life. This means a close coöperation in the making of the home. True love issues in a sincerity that does not deceive; that faces economic problems honestly, and accepts self-denial, if need be. Many homes have been wrecked because of an insincere and selfish desire to have one's own way, regardless of the common good of the home.

There is much muddled thinking in married life about the desire for independent action. This grows out of a failure to understand the difference between self-expression and self-development. Self-expression is the urge to do what one wants independently of others with no thought of any responsibility save the desire to satisfy oneself. Self-development, on the other hand, is the independent initiative and working out of one's capacity to achieve in harmony with certain common purposes and goals which husband and wife

have set for themselves. Many make money the goal, and each goes to an independent job each morning. This is not as enriching to personality as having a common purpose, higher than mere money, in which each works with independent initiative, but with the comradeship and supplemental powers that come to us in the atmosphere of true self-forgetting love. The capacity of the man is needed by the woman, and the man in turn needs the help of the woman's special gifts. In such a relation, the highest self-development of each is possible, and spiritual powers are released.

There are beautiful houses with every comfort where the woman is only a social parasite, a diversion for her husband, interested in nothing creative, but frittering away the years in social clubs and games, while even the children, if there be any, are left to their own devices. For the husband, the house is a private hotel where he has diversion from his real work, which he carries on in a world apart from his wife. Such houses are not homes, and the spiritual gifts of true love are not there. Love inevitably means working together for a central purpose to which each contributes the gifts of personality. It means the losing of one's self-interest in real devotion to the

interests of the other members of the family. The divine law of life, "Give, and it shall be given unto you . . . pressed down, and running over," could create joy and satisfaction in home life beyond words to express if we were willing to follow it as our daily law of life. It is the only law that makes for perfect oneness and for a union that even death cannot break.

When one thinks of the usual difficulties of married life, such as the dominance of one temperament over another, the unconcern of the stronger members for the full self-realization of the weaker members, the selfish insistence on control regardless of the good of all, the freedom of one which entails bondage for the others—the cause of all is the lack of true love which gives instead of grabs. Some of us have been handicapped by this for so many years that there seems no way out. There is a way out through the contagious spirit of even one member who makes visible to the group each day the real spirit of love. It may take time to change the attitudes of the others, but there is no other way of transforming the unworthy to the ideal. Such observed situations ought to bring to young people, not a spirit of cynicism about marriage, but the resolve to enter into no marriage

union save on the basis of these eternal spiritual principles. This means a love that seeks ever the good of the other rather than its own.

The central united purpose of a house in which husband and wife are frankly one and working for the same end is the only foundation on which the child in the home can find any center for its cosmos. Father and mother are the first God that a child knows. Through the love, unity, and wisdom of the parents, the little one finds a basis for trust, dependence, and obedience. This makes it easy in later years to trust and depend on the God it has never seen, but whose life and power has been made visible through its earthly home life. Therein lies the chief responsibility of parentage, and it needs to be brought home eloquently every day. It is a solemn responsibility to enter into the marriage union. It is not only the present joy, but the future program that is undertaken, that must be fully considered before entering into this most divine of all relationships.

Most of the modern discussions on companionate marriage and the plausibility of easy divorce do not take into account the welfare of the child. One of the ominous portents for the future is the spirit of cynicism one sees in the minds of countless young children who are the victims of broken

homes. They sense clearly the selfishness that brought them into life and then left them. Their suffering over the divided cosmos in the home where loyalties are divided and where their sense of loneliness is deeper than the mere absence brings is one of the greatest tragedies in modern life. It must break the heart of Christ as he sees these little ones bereft of any visible expression of his love that helps them to understand the way of life.

It would be well for all young men and women to read quietly and earnestly each day St. Paul's great description of love in the thirteenth chapter of his first letter to the Corinthians until it becomes habitual to the conscious and subconscious mind to have this attitude of mind and heart that alone is a guarantee for human happiness. As Jesus said, "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, *as I have loved you.*"

For Study and Discussion

One of the chief glories of life is the coming together of a man and a woman as husband and wife. The joy of love, the sense of protection, the freedom from loneliness, the thrill of a common task are possible in highest degree if the union has been based on selfless love and a com-

mon desire to put God's purpose first in their lives. Too often the marriage issues only from the thrill of sex-urge alone, and many important facts are not faced before the betrothal. Those include congeniality of temperament, a common desire for a family, a mutual desire to grow from strength to strength rather than to expect all of life's privileges at once. A willingness on the part of each to work for a common ideal is needed and a frankness about all things that make for oneness, business methods, economic program, personal health, and willingness to share in responsibility. If these are faced before marriage, there is a guarantee for permanent happiness.

> When God formed man, he made him to resemble God; male and female, he formed them both and blessed them, calling them human on the day when they were formed. —GENESIS 5: 1, 2.

> It used to be said, Whoever divorces his wife must give her a divorce certificate. But I tell you, anyone who divorces his wife for any reason except unchastity makes her an adulteress; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.
> —WORDS OF JESUS: MATTHEW 5: 31, 32.

> It is what comes from a man, that is what defiles him. From within, from the heart of man, the designs of evil come: sexual vice, stealing, murder,

adultery, lust, malice, deceit, sensuality, envying, slander, arrogance, recklessness, all these evils issue from within and they defile a man.

WORDS OF JESUS: MARK 7: 20-23.

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. . . . So ought husbands to love their wives—to love them as their own bodies (he who loves his wife loves himself). For no one ever hates his flesh; no, he nourishes and cherishes it. . . . Therefore shall a man leave father and mother and cleave to his wife, and the pair shall be one flesh. . . . Let every man of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife reverence her husband. Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

—EPHESIANS 5: 25, 28, 29, 31, 33.

To attain the spiritual law of love and all its power necessitates the self-discipline of the body. How does the list of inner evils cited by Jesus in Mark account for the breakdown of family life to-day? What is the most important factor to reckon with in family troubles to-day? What makes sacrifice worth while? How is it possible to win back unselfish love after it has begun to be selfish? What motives are most powerful? How can true love overcome temperamental differences? Before marriage what qualities of spirit should be discovered? Why is it not right to marry if the spiritual ideal of love is not the

mutual purpose of both? How does frankness, a common economic program, and an open and aboveboard attitude facilitate the joy of home life? What common purpose outside of ourselves could weld family life into lasting unity?

Dear Father, who didst purpose that Thy creative power should be shared by the oneness of two lives, help every man and woman who joined their lives through love for this divine privilege to dedicate themselves to Thee. May Thy joy be in them, and may their life reflect the spirit and self-forgetting love of our Master, who came to show us the reality of Thy love. Through this Christ and Redeemer of our lives we come. Amen.

CHAPTER VIII

RELATIONSHIP WITH NEIGHBORS

AMONG the mysteries of our life, why is it that, of all the millions of human beings living on earth, certain ones should cross our path? How are they chosen, and why do they come near us? One goes into a strange town or college where there are thousands of strange people all about us. Some never make contact with us, while others do. What is the law of life back of it all?

This mystery is only explained satisfactorily in one way. God sends us down as living spirits for some purpose by which he means us to grow up into a life of power and possibility. It cannot be done in isolation. "It is not good for man to be alone," runs the inspired Word. So God in his wisdom and love and knowledge of all our possibilities and future brings our life near to other personalities. Some of them are destined to help us to our goal; others to work with us on a common task; others to draw out from us help and counsel that will enlarge our sympathies and develop our character. Some may apparently be a detriment to our best life unless we, by react-

ing in the opposite direction, get new strength. A college girl had to room for a year with another girl who was the embodiment of insincerity and untruthful in all her ways. After failing to effect a separation, the first girl found as the days went by such an intense dislike of insincerity growing within her that she became determined to be truthful at all costs in all her life. After years proved that this decision and its effect upon her character were the means of gaining for her the supreme opportunities for her life career.

In line with this intimate knowledge of our needs, which God alone has, comes the psychological law of the action and reaction of certain temperaments upon one another. Like draws like, or reacts to certain qualities of spirit in another personality. All the mysteries of human relations have not yet been plumbed. The one great truth that we dare not ignore is that every life that crosses our path is a neighbor, and as such we are bound to have some contact. We do not know what surprises are in store for us. All we must do is to trust the wisdom of our heavenly Father, who knows our needs and brings us into contact with other lives by his guidance. Through this experience we learn, we give, we have the joy of fellowship, and find enrichment for the growth

of our mind and spirit. Neighbors thus become solemn responsibilities. They do not come to us by chance. There is a purpose back of every contact.

Through our neighbors we widen out our possibilities of world-wide contacts. This is essential for the complete life. Some people restrict their possibilities by drawing a line around them which includes only certain persons of their own choosing and resenting the approach of anyone outside that line. There are countless people in our own choosing, and resenting the approach of anyone outside that line. There are countless people in our own land who turn away from all foreigners and strangers from other lands. They treat them as if they were not human beings simply because they speak another language. Some of the largest chances for culture and world-wide understanding have thus been lost. On the other hand, those who feel that the whole world is neighbor and are true to their contacts develop a power of influence greater than their wildest dreams. Why is it that we are so devoted to what is uniform and standardized and suspect anything that is different?

If we are willing to let God bring into our life such personalities as he sees we need for our best

development, what are the spiritual principles by which we can deal wisely with every one who becomes neighbor to us? It is by following these laws of life that we get the highest values out of human contacts.

The first principle for all human contacts is that we must look at every one in relationship to the perfect personality of Jesus Christ. The only way we can discern shades of colors is by looking at them in the light of the sun. True values are seen only in relation to Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness. To discern true values we must look at every person in comparison with the Spirit of Jesus, and then we can form a true estimate of what our relationship to this stranger can be. Jesus alone is the perfect standard of character.

Another truth about people is that in every life Christ is longing to be released. Some stifle him through selfish desire and evil purpose; some are so baffled by life that they have forgotten Him as their source of power for victory; some are meeting life with courage and letting God control their ways. If we truly love Christ, it will be our joy to help release the life of Christ within every one to whom we are neighbor. It is this desire that gives us patience to bear with many who are blind or opposed to spiritual living. We

can pity such when we think of all that they are missing in life. Sooner or later they will see their mistake if we are true in our relations with them. Our Lord says that even a cup of cold water given because we have his spirit will not lose its reward.

Another way of working with a neighbor is to link him up with us in some worth-while task. If we are open-doored to God, the truth of Jesus's words will be evident when he said, "Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world." One with God is a majority, we often hear quoted. We need not be afraid of being influenced wrongly by strangers who become our neighbors if we are conscious of the God within us leading us into all the truth. He can give us an influence that may lead many to know him through us. Just as we know the character of God as it was made visible in Jesus, so others understand him when they see him in us. There is no joy in life greater than leading a neighbor into the light that leads to eternal life. Perhaps God brings some neighbors near us for this very purpose.

The chief reason why wars persist in this world is because of our unneighborly feeling toward those who are different from us. If we understood them as brothers, it would be easy to

build up a relationship of friendship. The kingdom of God is built and maintained on loving our neighbor as ourselves. We are not personally responsible for those whom we have never known, but we are bound up by the purpose of God with those whose lives touch ours. Once a friend was kind to a foreign student who spoke little English and was in trouble. Years went by, and the incident was forgotten. Finally the friend had to go to the land of the foreign student on important business. All doors seemed closed when suddenly the student passed by on the street and recognized the American friend. Strange to say, every door opened and success came because the one who had once been an unimportant student was now a great leader in the land. It may take years to discover the reason why some lives touch ours, but fortunate is that one who never fails to respond to the neighbor in need. Time will reveal its reward.

"I was a stranger, and ye took me in," says our Lord to some who had shown brotherly love. A great reward was theirs. If we love only those whom we feel it will be to our advantage to love, we are not better than the animals which seek always to get everything for themselves. People discern this spirit in us. "He is trying to see

what he can get out of me," said one man of another; and the wife said, "She is a social climber; she wants to get into our crowd." Such spirit defeats itself and does not get what it seeks. It is only the law of life stated in the words of our Lord, "Give, and it shall be given unto you," that leads us into largeness of life. It is a sound principle for business as well as for neighbors.

More and more we need to realize that our vision is confined to to-day. We do not know what to-morrow will bring forth. Therefore the wise soul will not neglect any touch with life to-day that may be the tiny hinge on which a big door swings into a great new country. We must walk by faith rather than sight. Our faith must rest in the bigness of God's love and purpose for us, and the unfolding of that purpose in daily contacts with life. History is full of the miracles that have come as the result of being true in little things. We cannot afford to pass by on the other side because we feel so important when some one bruised and helpless lies in our path. The Good Samaritan, though temporarily delayed in his business, gained a spiritual reward far more valuable than mere money.

Many people overlook the great reward of fellowship with another mind. The Word runs,

"One shall chase a thousand, but two shall put ten thousand to flight." There is something limitless about the power of even two who are together in neighborly love. Evidently the path to omnipotence lies in working together with others in unselfish love. To come together not for selfish advantage, but for a common interest to which each dedicates himself, is the secret of the conquering life. Jesus sums up the whole of our obligation in these words: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. The second is this, *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.* There is none other commandment greater than these." With such a challenge, who of us will dare to ignore this greatest of all contacts with life? Is there any humble life touching ours which we dare to ignore?

For Study and Discussion

It would be well for each of us to list our neighbors and weigh the values that have come to our spiritual life because of them—the opportunities, the tests, the inspiration, the joy, and all that goes with the normal life. Have we chosen our neighbors deliberately, or have most of them come with the unfolding of our daily life? In David we

see the miracle of the spirit of love which regarded neighbors as friends. In spite of his falls, his spirit always came back to the ideal of self-forgetting love. One of the significant things about neighbors is the fact that so many of them are unforeseen and connected with the path of our duty. In this way God gives us the power to link up with other lives which will be important to us at some time in our lives. It may take years before the result comes, but each person who touches our life is part of God's plan for us.

David said longingly, "Oh if some one would only give me a drink of water from the well at Bethlehem, the well beside the gate!" So the three braves broke through the Philistine lines, drew some water from the well at Bethlehem, . . . and brought it to David. But he would not drink it; he poured it out for the Eternal, crying, "The Eternal forbid that I should do it! This is the blood of men who went at the risk of their lives!" So he would not drink it.

—2 SAMUEL 23: 15-18.

"Who is my neighbor?" Jesus rejoined: "A man going down from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among robbers who stripped and belabored him and then went off leaving him half dead. Now it so chanced that a priest was going down the same road, but on seeing him he went past on the opposite side. So did a Levite who came to the spot; he looked at him but passed on the opposite side. However, a Samaritan traveler

came to where he was and felt pity when he saw him; he went to him, bound his wounds up, pouring oil and wine into them, mounted him on his own steed, took him to an inn, and attended to him. Next morning he took out a couple of shillings and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Attend to him, and if you are put to any extra expense I will refund you on my way back.' Which of these three men, in your opinion, proved a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" He said, "The man who took pity on him." Jesus said to him, "Then go and do the same."

—WORDS OF JESUS: LUKE 10: 30-37.

Each of us must consult his neighbor's interests, not his own. —1 CORINTHIANS 10: 24.

Name some of the unchristian ways in which we moderns deal with neighbors. What is our responsibility to the needy folk who cross our path? What means of help can we give in these modern days? What are the social agencies in our city to which we can relate those in need? How would you describe David's spirit toward the three men who risked their lives for him? Have you seen modern evidence of this spirit? If so, describe them. Are there some things right for us personally that we should refrain from when with certain neighbors? List some of these instances. What are the evidences of Christian consideration one should show to a neighbor?

Name some instances where a neighbor has been a link to a new horizon of living for us. Jesus said that when we feed the hungry or visit the sick we are doing it to him. Dare we neglect anyone in the light of this truth?

Lord Christ, help us to release Thee in the lives of those who come near us. May we heal their wounds, comfort their hearts, and draw near to them as neighbors in the radiance of the Spirit. As Thou didst come near to us on earth and overlook our unloveliness in Thy eager love to bring us into fellowship with Thee, so may we follow Thy example with all those whom Thou didst send to us. Thus may we work with Thee to bring Thy kingdom into the hearts of men. We ask this in Thy dear name. Amen.

CHAPTER IX

RELATIONSHIP WITH AN ENEMY

AN enemy is a self-centered soul who is determined to have his own way and satisfy his own desires. He is a jealous soul who is unhappy if he sees anyone else having something that he wants. A nation by hard work develops its lands into rich and fertile fields. It has resources of mineral wealth and spacious harbors. Contentment reigns. Suddenly a cloud looms on the horizon. A neighboring country covets the wealth and seacoast for its own people and organizes its men into troops and marches against the people of the desired land to take it by force. An enemy has done it. History is full of sadness because of wars and hostility, and even to-day unbelievably great sums of money have to be spent each year for defense against potential enemies. Added to this are the lesser enmities between groups within each country and the hatred of one man for the other. Man has never been able to control it. Can God do it with our help? If so, how?

Jesus Christ is most definite in his counsel about our relationship with an enemy. We have a saying that it takes two to make a quarrel. Jesus

tells us that the first step to take is to be sure that we do not share the same spirit that the enemy has. He hates you. Do not hate him. Love him. Treat him as if he were a friend. He wants to take from you all he can get. You are not to grab, but give. "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink," says Jesus. Meet hatred with love.

"But how can we love one whom we do not like?" you may ask. "We can only love what is true and lovely and beautiful." Enmity is ugly and unlovable." This is true, and we need not blur sense of right and wrong. What we need to realize is that the enemy and his hatreds need not be one. Evil may have a strangle hold upon him, and he is to be pitied because he has been overpowered. Perhaps he allowed the evil desires to have sway, not realizing that he could not turn them out later. Jesus says that we must love the soul of the enemy and pray for him that the power of evil may be broken, and he may be set free. There are thousands of people in whom the Christ is imprisoned and in chains. He is longing to be released in the human heart, but cannot possess that life because it is already possessed by the evil spirit of jealousy, and selfishness, and lust. In one of his last talks with his disciples

Jesus pictures the time when those in whom unselfish love is dwelling shall have their reward. He tells them that when he was sick, and in prison, and hungry, they came to him and ministered to him in love. They are surprised and ask when they ever saw him in such dire need. Then he says: "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me." The only way we can love the enemy and the unlovable soul is to keep in mind the truth that by our love we may help to release the imprisoned Christ within him and change them from enemies to friends.

It grows easier also to love an enemy when we face the fact that often we ourselves have been enemies of Jesus Christ. Every time we have wanted our own way and acted as though we were the only important ones to consider and have ignored the needs of others, we have broken friendship with Jesus. Where would we be if he had not continued to love us and wait for us to come back to him? Jesus put the challenge squarely to his disciples when he said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." We cannot walk hand in hand with our Christ unless we are going along the road he always travels—the

road of an unselfish love which includes every member of the human race.

It is a tremendous challenge, and often we say that it is an impossible standard, and no one can hope to attain it. In this way we think that we have a good alibi for not taking Jesus seriously and literally. But if we listen quietly, we may hear the whisper of the still small voice in our hearts, saying, "All things are possible to him that believeth." And believing means taking Jesus at his word and trusting him to make it good. As Donald Hankey once wrote to a friend from the war trenches in France, "Religion seems to me to be betting your life that there is a God." There were thousands of things happening in the war that looked as if hatred would destroy the God of love; but Hankey was betting his life on the truth of the God whom Jesus revealed as Father, "who is not willing that any should perish," but that all should know by real experience that love is the greatest power in the world.

There is an interesting law of life which applies to this relation with an enemy. Our appreciation of anything depends upon the law of relative values. We see black as black only in contrast with white. The vision of the beauty of the spring is a miracle of beauty to our eyes only

because we see it in contrast to the black bareness of the winter landscape. We appreciate culture and courtesy especially after we have had contact with uncouth and uncultured folk. We are usually blind to that which has been a continuous experience in our life. "I never realized the beauty of my home life until I went out into the world and knocked about in so many other places," said a young man the other day. The same spirit works in the case of evil-mindedness. An enemy may not see himself as others see him until he sees the contrast between himself and one who has the spirit of friendliness. An artist who had painted a crude picture of some horses tore it up after he had seen Rosa Bonheur's famous "Horse Fair." He could not bear the revelation of his own poor skill. Thus love conquers enmity when enmity sees how unlovely it is in contrast. Love is truly the greatest force in the world. Napoleon said to General Bertrand, speaking of Jesus: "Between him and all others there is no possible term of comparison. Alexander, Cæsar, and Charlemagne founded empires; but on what did they found them? Upon force. Jesus founded his empire upon love, and to-day millions would die for him."

An enemy often becomes a friend if we expect

him to rise to that height. There is something gallant in every one, if we could discover it, which rises to the ideal and challenge we set before him. If we expect him to be his worst self, he will probably justify our expectation. There is nothing that calls out the best in us like expectant faith. It is like a trumpet call to all our aspirations, and we find ourselves responding with eagerness. We like to be trusted to be heroic. It gives us a chance to get away from our sordid living. We all know that in the end enmity brings self-destruction. The expectant faith of some wise friends brings new hope that we can break our chains and be free once more. This faith calls forth also memories of our childhood and all those associations in our past experience with what was true, and pure, and ideal. Often those memories which lie buried in our subconscious mind are rallied by the encouraging faith of a friend and rise up in new strength and drive out the more recent enmity. We never can measure the strength of the beautiful and true and noble things that are packed into our minds when young. They are hidden resources to hold us true in the temptations of later life. Therefore, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out

of it are the issues of life." Let us build up the hidden treasures of memory every day.

Among our friends and acquaintances there are times when misunderstandings arise which lead to heat of spirit and strained relations. The cause may be a slight one. Some difference of opinion, some refusal to follow the lead of a group who are bent on carrying out some pet plan, some indiscreet word, may cause a rift which may widen into a chasm. Even in religious organizations the desire for leadership may result in some personal ambition which will brook no opposing view. People are not wanting to be enemies of the good, but want to achieve the good by dominating the policy of action. Also some suffer from hurt vanity because of some fancied slight from another. The history of religion, past and present, is full of such experiences which break relations for centuries. It is the most serious enmity to overcome.

There are three ways of meeting these situations when we are wounded in the house of our friends. The first way is by a certain demonstration of love which is difficult for most of us. It is the love which speaks frankly, gently, and honestly and faces the spiritual dangers of mental cocksureness and personal ambition. Jesus told

us of this method when he said, "If thy brother sin against thee, go, show him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." And then on another occasion he says: "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave thy gift, go and make peace with thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." From Jesus's point of view there is something tremendously important about two spiritual brothers being one. It seems to work by geometrical ratio, according to the Scripture, because it says, "One shall chase a thousand, but two shall put ten thousand to flight." The power of even two who are one seems to be almost limitless. Just as there need to be two poles to complete the circuit of electricity, so there need to be two or more united hearts and minds to work the miracles of the spiritual life. The most sweeping promise our Lord ever made was based on the condition of unity. "If *two* of you shall agree touching anything you shall ask, it shall be done. . . . For where two or three are *together* [in oneness] in my name, there am I in the midst of them." If this be so, there is no effort too great to heal differences among friends or those of our common faith.

Another way to heal enmities is to face the truth that there is only one thing that really matters, and that is the purpose and plan of God. Our own little ideas may be dear to us, but foolish in the light of God's greater purpose. If we will say with St. Paul, "Now I know in part. I see through a glass, darkly," we may share some of his greatness—the greatness which comes from a sense of humility. Not all our opinions are foolish, but they need to be verified by bringing them to God and waiting for his still small voice to speak to us about them. It means that we have learned the secret of being *still* before God and listening to him in all patience and honesty. The greatest inspirations and visions of our lives come only when we practice this art of meditation and prayer and waiting for his holy suggestions. God never fails us when we come to him this way.

We need also to plan for certain times when as friends we can meet together for fellowship in prayer and quiet sharing of our spiritual experiences. When several minds are bent on the same purpose, they become welded together into a friendship which no strain in life can break. The full ideal will not come all at once, but we can begin by getting into a new relationship with

the one nearest to us where a strain is beginning to be felt. Day by day we can deal with each situation as it comes up, and before we know it the bonds of friendship will include more and more until not even the most antagonistic soul will be able to resist the flood tide of friendliness which reverences God and his far-reaching purposes.

For Study and Discussion

The distinguishing mark between a Christian and a pagan is found in their attitude toward enemies. A pagan hates an enemy and does all in his power to get him in his power; a Christian loves his enemy and shows kindness to him. Jesus said, "He that hateth his brother is a murderer," thus emphasizing the fact that the spirit within the heart is equal to the deed. To love an enemy and pray for him is to open the heart wide to the spirit of our God, who is love. Nothing tests our devotion to God more than our daily relations with people who unconsciously or deliberately obstruct our course. We cannot love what they do, but we can pity them for their blindness and pray sincerely as Christ prayed for his murderers, "Father, forgive them: they know not what they do." There are unrealized possi-

bilities in the spiritual unity of even two people and equally great possibilities for alienation, now and in the future, for those who break relations with other lives through enmity. David towered above the men of his generation in his spirit toward his enemies. No greater power could be released now on earth than such a spirit toward all who work against our ideals.

> Saul took three thousand picked men . . . and went in search of David. . . . David's men whispered to him, "Here is the day on which the Eternal promised that he would put your enemy in your power and let you do what you like to him." But he said to his men, "The Eternal forbid that I should do this to my lord, to the Eternal's anointed!" . . . But David got up and secretly cut off the skirt of Saul's robe, though afterwards David reproached himself for having cut off Saul's skirt. . . . And Saul wept aloud. "You are a better man than I am," he said to David; "you have done good to me, and I have done evil to you."
>
> —1 SAMUEL 24: 2, 4, 6, 17.

> You have heard the saying, "You must love your neighbor and hate your enemy." But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven.
>
> —WORDS OF JESUS: MATTHEW 5: 43, 44.

> Keep in harmony with one another; . . . never be self-conceited. Never pay back evil for evil to anyone; . . . be at peace with all men; . . . never revenge

> yourselves, beloved, . . . for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will exact a requital—the Lord has said it. No, if your enemy is hungry, feed him, if he is thirsty, give him drink; for in this way you will make him feel a burning sense of shame. —ROMANS 12: 16-21.

What answer shall we make to those who say it is only manly to repay an injury? In what way can the power of love be demonstrated if not in dealing with the unloving? If enmity is in the heart, can the heart be changed by a stronger power? What methods of love work best? List changes of heart that have come to enemies through love. What does prayer for an enemy release? If God and we worked together for this change of heart, are not the chances for change greater? Why is unity necessary on this earth? What list of good things could come to us if we were friends with the whole world? How is love for an enemy a test of our real union with Christ?

O Christ, who didst teach us to pray for our enemies that we might be like unto our Father of love, help us to be like Thee, who didst pray for those who were nailing Thee to the cross. Help us to forgive as we, all unworthy, long to be forgiven by Thee. May we prove by our life that we are different from the world and truly have Thy spirit, whose fruit is love, living in us. Help us to win this victory of spirit through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

CHAPTER X

RELATIONSHIP WITH SPIRITUAL TEACHERS

IN every branch of human achievement the expert has a distinct value not only for his own success, but for the service of society. Those who have acquired skill and experience in dealing with mechanics, the intellectual life, or spiritual laws are necessary to every one who lives and wants to get the most out of life. This truth is recognized by us all in the realm of electricity, or house building, or training in school subjects; but there are countless people who assume that spiritual values are speculative and not definite, and that no one can lead them to victory in this realm. Therefore churches are deserted, religious books are not opened, and association with religious leaders is shunned.

There is no greater mistake about life than this. Simply because we cannot handle the mysteries of our spirit does not detract from their value and importance for our life. We have a body which houses a mind and a conscious spirit. The body has contacts with earthly material. The mind interprets it to the spirit, and the spirit

guides the mind and body—what shall be done and how life shall be lived. Our conscious spirit is not only in contact with our mind, but is also in contact with what has been called a superconsciousness which we are aware of from time to time during moments of illumination, or vision, or awareness of a vast protecting power and life all about us. It is through this superconscious life that God, who made us, speaks to us and gives us strength when we are weak and wisdom when we are baffled. We cannot plumb its depths or understand it any more than the scientist understands all the possibilities of electricity. All they know is what it does when it is embodied in some apparatus through which it can manifest itself in a tangible way.

The uniqueness of Jesus was that he was always in full contact with the superconscious life and power of God; therefore God lived in him in fullness. We too have the capacity to get in contact with this higher life, but ours is only an occasional experience because we do not value it enough to give time for training ourselves in the principles by which this contact could become a natural daily experience. The only way we can do it is to spend time relating ourselves to the life of Jesus and learning wisdom from the experience

of those earnest souls who have pressed on to make this their great achievement. Lonely, depressing, and uninspired is the old age of any human being who feels his bodily and mental strength dwindling, and only is aware of vacancy and blackness in his spirit. God does not mock us by giving us powers that can reach out and measure the distant stars, only to lead us to oblivion after a few years on earth. He meant us to have a relationship with him here and now or he would never have embodied himself in Jesus Christ so that we could have contacts with him.

There are three main relationships with spiritual teachers for our training in spiritual principles. The first is the Church; the second is the study of religious books by which experienced people have shared their best thinking with us; the third is spiritual fellowship with those who are working out in their lives the great spiritual adventure with Jesus Christ. The value of these three sources for our ability to conquer life is immeasurable. Let us look at what the possibilities of these relationships really are for our practical living.

There is a well-tested psychological principle about the effect of group thinking on the mind of each member of the group. If a number of

people sit in silence, concentrating for fifteen minutes on some one subject, the effect on each member is one of insight and mental quickening beyond his usual power of thinking. The thinking of all enriches the mind of each by the law of mental suggestion. This is one of the ways in which we grow in spiritual insight by being in Church with the group who are thinking on the relationship with God. It is not always that which is preached, but the influence of atmosphere, spiritual suggestions through hymns, reading from the Scriptures, and hidden yearnings and prayers in the hearts of those gathered with us. Light on problems, scattering of fears, a sense of God's presence, bring something each one needs for the unknown tests of the week to come. For many of us the hour in church is the only time in the week when we can concentrate on spiritual things without interruption.

This relationship with the Church brings to us also a sense of relative values. Although there are imperfect people in it, including ourselves, they are there because they value the spiritual and long for it. This helps us to discern the motives of people outside and form true judgments that may prevent our being drawn into paths that will hinder instead of help our way to victorious

living. When a room has little light in it, we cannot discern the articles in it accurately; but when the sunlight comes, we see them as they are. We get a sense of light through our contact with the Church which helps us to see the world outside in true proportions. We cannot afford to ignore this life in the group of those who believe in and worship God. Still another relationship much to be considered. Jesus asked his disciples to meet together and celebrate the spiritual relation with him through the bread and wine of the Communion. These, he said, are his body and blood given for us, and we are to observe that Last Supper in remembrance of him. It was his last request, and our devotion to him will mean that we keep it as a sacred trust as it is embodied at the heart of the Church. There is a spiritual experience which comes to us as we draw near and make our Communion which brings the divine life into our body and helps us to live in spiritual victory.

There never was a time when every relation with spiritual reality was so challenged by modern doubts and the bewilderment of our widening world. Mysteries that our grandparents never dreamed of are now scientific facts of everyday experience. There is such a wealth of modern

discovery that people are asking whether the personality of Jesus is only a historic figure of the long ago or whether he has any real relation to this modern age. Fortunately for us, there are some of the greatest scholars to-day who have taken the time to think out these questions with us in books that are available. They open up wide vistas of fascinating interest and show that Jesus is really not alone a historic figure of two thousand years ago, but the visible expression of those laws of life that will help us to live as conquering men and women in this modern world with its possibilities. These writers have bared their hearts to us, and we may find the deepest friendship with them by thinking along with them. Also that largest part of us, the realm of our spirit, will take on new power and wide contacts with life. If a relationship is established with only those books listed in the appendix of this book, a new world of wide relations would be open to us. Our thinking must catch up with our modern living or we shall be lopsided in our development. The value of an expert in spiritual experience is as great as the expert in physics or language.

Most of us choose our friends from among those who make some physical or social appeal

to us, or from those who chance to be thrown with us in school or business. Such relationships do something for us and are valuable, but we need to seek also relations with those who are spiritual experts and can inspire us to highest human living. The value of such a friend is beyond computing. It gives us a chance to work out in the laboratory of life the reality of what to so many seems only a vague mystery. One has only to think of such men as Kagawa of Japan, whose spiritual friendship with the poor in the slums was so enriching to their lives that now every one in the nation craves the inspiration and help of his friendship. One friend who can give us true fellowship in spiritual realities is worth one hundred others who only are one with us in athletics, or social pastimes, or in business life. In fact, one of the hardest things we have to face is to be content with those on such planes of living after we have had one friend who ranges the stars and in whose purity, truth, and unselfish love we can relax in perfect confidence. The only satisfaction with others comes from the fact that we can be to them a spiritual friend and give them what our friend has given us.

In the recent biography of Temple Gairdner of

Cairo, who went into the life beyond recently, many of his friends speak of the great help and strength that stayed by them for weeks when, after some intimate talk with him about their problems, he enfolded them in the presence of God in some brief but beautiful prayer. There is a power in the fellowship of two who are one and who bring into that oneness the presence of our Lord through a prayer. Such an experience is like what the two disciples said to one another on the way to Emmaus, "Was not our heart burning within us, while he spake to us in the way?" They understood this after they had been in the presence of the living Lord.

There is such a loneliness in human hearts and such a feeling that no one really understands us that at times it overwhelms us, and we feel that we cannot go on living. This is all because we were made for fellowship with something more than earthly. It is the voice of our spirit crying out for friendship. This can first be satisfied by stealing away into some spot of silence and opening our heart to the entrance of the Master, who said, "I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." To have the privilege of such fellowship is our

greatest gift. Truly, no effort is too much to realize this in coming to Christ as an actual experience. Many have found it true. Let us, too, claim our privilege.

For Study and Discussion

In the many Psalms of David, which are the spontaneous expressions of his inner spirit, there is constant allusion to the wisdom and guidance of God, who keeps him from stumbling in ignorance. His dependence on God and the heavenly wisdom made him the great king and victorious character that he was. Especially is this significant in view of the standards of morals and lack of scientific education of those days when primitive urges controlled men. To rise to such a point of victory and spiritual strength as David rose meant a reliance on spiritual prophets and teachers and the guidance of the voice of God within. If such triumph could come to a man in those pre-Christian days, how far short we fall to-day if we fail to use all the help and illumination that is possible for us at a time when the glory of Christ is already discerned and his teachings are known as highest wisdom.

Happy the man who never goes by the advice of the ungodly, who never takes the sinner's road, nor joins

the company of scoffers, but finds his joy in the Eternal's law, poring over it day and night. He is like a tree planted by a stream, that bears fruit in due season, with leaves that never fade; whatever he does, he prospers. —PSALM 1: 1-3.

The Eternal's rulings are upright, and altogether just—more to be prized than gold, than plenty of rare gold, sweeter than honey itself, than honey from the comb. Yes, and by them thy servant takes warning; in following them there is rich profit.
—PSALM OF DAVID 19: 2-11.

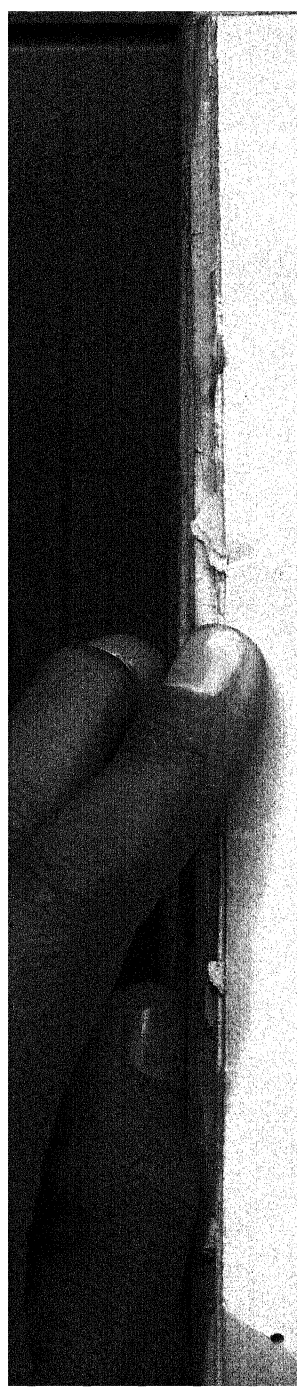
O God, thou art my God, I yearn for thee; body and soul, I trust, I long for thee, like a land without water, weary, dry. As I have seen thee in the sanctuary, with visions of thy power and majesty, so will I bless thee while I live, lifting my hands in prayers to thee. —PSALM OF DAVID 63: 1-3.

Those who are taught must share all the blessings of life with those who teach them the Word. . . . Let us do good to all men and in particular to the household of the faith. —GALATIANS 6: 6-10.

Gratitude is one of the rarest virtues we cultivate, and yet it brings larger rewards than many others. It is a spontaneous reaction of appreciation toward a good that has been shared with us by others. To cultivate the habit of thanksgiving to God each morning for all the beauty and joy of the world, and to appreciate each touch of

love with other life, is the greatest secret for success and influence. Make a list of God's gifts that can be recalled each day. Write out also some prayers of thanksgiving which we can use to lift up our spirit when it droops. What are the gifts and helps that have come to us from spiritual teachers? How could the Church foster a deeper spirit of thanksgiving? What are the characteristics of those who can help spiritually to-day? What part of the Bible can best stir our heart for the day's victory? How can we best cultivate the heart of a little child which is the necessary quality for spiritual attainment?

Dear Father, we thank Thee that Thou hast not left us to struggle on alone, stumbling in ignorance. We bless Thee for the teachings of Jesus and Thy disciples that are available for us; and for all the saints who lived and proved Thy wisdom in their daily experience. Help us to be as little children, willing to learn wisdom from spiritual teachers. May we put aside our vanity of mind and our hardness of heart. May we not be wise in our own conceits, but in simplicity wait for the illumination of the Spirit, who will guide us into all the truth. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



CHAPTER XI

RELATIONSHIP TO POSTERITY

THERE is a tendency to-day to become so absorbed in the possibilities of the present that we are not interested in the long look ahead. Some modern philosophers attribute the old-time thought of the future to a mental device freeing people from the burden of daily hardship. That may have been true for some of olden time, but to-day our scientific outlook on the world is entirely different. We now see the unity of the universe and its stretches of discovery and possibility, and realize that the laws of life here now fit us for future achievement. Any one of us who believes in the purpose of God for us as revealed by Jesus—namely, that we are meant to be immortal in our life and experience—dare not discount the future and our relation to it. It is the future alone which gives meaning and a thrill to all we do here.

In fact, this life is a training course for the larger powers of the future. What we do here brings not only results for to-morrow, but carries on in its influence during all the years. Even

seemingly insignificant moments are fraught with great possibilities. A certain train was ten minutes late, which meant that a passenger had to take a later connection. He looked upon this delay as an hour wasted from his business. However, when the other train came he found himself sitting beside a stranger, with whom he fell into conversation. To his surprise, the result of the talk meant entrance into a new business opening which he had coveted for years. What he had looked upon as an hour lost was the link to a boundless future. Thus the experiences of today relate themselves to the future, and we need to treat each one of them with respect. Especially do hours and minutes take on value if in our shortsighted vision we trust ourselves to the farsighted heavenly Father, who sees the end from the beginning and can guide us step by step to a conquering, limitless life if we follow his laws of life. When communication with God through prayer is possible, and when He can bring heavenly wisdom to our remembrance through his Spirit, as Jesus promised, it is difficult to see how any of us can be content to grope on blindly, living by speculative desire rather than by a wisdom beyond our own. There are none so blind as those who will not see.

Our relation to posterity is both a responsibility and the greatest privilege. We cannot measure accurately the value or harm of what we do at the time we do it. It takes the perspective of the years ahead to judge truly. Just as none of the friends of Jesus realized what his life and death would mean to the world thousands of years ahead, so it is with us. Jesus has become the universal Christ, growing greater in his power and even now far ahead of the scientific laws of life that here have been slowly discovered. We, too, make our impact on life, and the effect of it influences or retards the life of thousands of people who come after us. When Benjamin Franklin sent a key up in the air on a kite during a thunderstorm to see whether electricity would charge it, he did not realize the vastness of electrical research which he started and which has blessed the world with untold comforts. In the same way evil practices have been started and have spread like a malignant disease through life. In the light of the future life we shall be judged as responsible, not for the act alone, but for all the consequences that resulted. The measure of the influence of a human being is not revealed for many years.

Since this power to influence the future is ours,

we need to think of it as our highest privilege and seek in every way to start impulses, standards, attitudes, and practices that are basically in accord with the way of life which Jesus demonstrated. We have also much proof which comes from modern research and which verifies the wisdom of the teaching of Jesus. For example, take his counsel about purity of living, which means control of bodily passions. The history of medicine and hygiene has proved conclusively that a lack of self-control develops diseases which bring disaster to unborn children and social evils that affect the health of more than one generation of descendants, to say nothing of ruining the health of one who started the trouble. We know now that purity is not only a spiritual teaching, but the revelation of a necessary law of healthful human life.

In the realm of business success this relation to posterity is equally true. If the parents of a child are square in their business deals and train it in honesty, courtesy, consideration of others, a broad-minded look on all sides of a situation, generosity of spirit, and the art of friendship, the chance for the future business success of that child is infinitely greater than could be possible in a home where none of these standards were

maintained. A stenographer wept over her inability to get a job. The fault began with her parents, who had no educational standards and used impossible English, so that the daughter had no sense of word values and made too many mistakes to make up for machine speed. The blight on youth could not be eradicated without years of hard effort.

In reading the biographies of the most famous men and women who have influenced their generation, one sees in the background some mother or father who put into the heart of the child a great spiritual ideal which the world sorely needed. The years passed, and the child became the leader of a great campaign for righteousness or social reform that blessed thousands. Or it may have come from some friend, or some book that released the spiritual capacities of some one for a great task. So often we measure our life by what we have been able to do and mourn over the fact that no great opportunities for achievement have come to us. We let it discourage us and kill our joy in life. If we only realized that we can embody in our spirit the highest ideals and give them to other lives that cross our path, our career could be filled with a romance and satisfaction that would bring a glow into the whole of

life. The most humble of us has the gift of friendship, and sooner or later can influence powerfully some one who comes near us if our heart has the sincere, self-forgetting interest in others and the spontaneous enthusiasm for the spiritual ideals of Jesus Christ. In the Gospels we find the name of that obscure disciple, Andrew, mentioned only three or four times. His one achievement was the desire to relate others to Christ. After discovering Jesus, he did his greatest work in seeking out Simon Peter and telling him about the Master and bringing him to know Him. All of the greatness of Peter is the outgrowth of humble Andrew's desire to share the best with his friends. Any one of us can serve as did Andrew.

This relation to the future helps to keep us humble. So often we want to do something that will bring to us the adoration and envy of others. We like to feel that we are important and successful in the eyes of the world. Many a man has broken his health and high standards of living because he wants to be known as a successful rich man. Such pride always goes before a fall. Let us be thankful that realities of the future and its spiritual values, though often invisible to this type of person, become as often clear to those whose humble life is built on simple faith and

trust in God and simple relationships with one's fellows. There is much hidden meaning in those sacred words, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God had prepared for them that love him." The romance of the spiritual life lies in the surprises and revelations that will come to us in future as we see the full value of some of those things that we counted as mere incidents in the day's living.

Thus we see that the true values of our life are not measured by a day or by eighty or ninety years. They have the dimensions of our spirit, which has the capacity for immortality. If we could realize this, it would free us from the daily chafing against inequality of circumstances, and the fact that our material possessions are less than those of our friends. It is not circumstances nor things, but the attitude of the spirit that makes for greatness. John Bunyan was confined in Bedford jail, cut off from all the advantages of those outside; but nothing could confine his spirit, and he made himself immortally famous by his "Pilgrim's Progress," the product of his spirit that has blessed and helped thousands all over the world. Very often it is the weight of possessions and alluring circumstances that blinds people to

the spiritual and fixes their attention only on earthly affairs. As Jesus said, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven." Instead of coveting things, we ought to make it our chief concern to transmute everything we control of a material nature into far-reaching spiritual values. In this possibility we are all equally endowed.

To have a perspective in life that sees the present as only a short trail up to the heights of future achievement, brings new spirit of patience and contentment into life that in turn brings health and power into daily living. Those who are always looking at their neighbors and trying to keep up with them and comparing themselves with them soon develop frazzled nerves and lines of anxiety in their faces that bring them to depression by middle age. It is the long look ahead that widens as the years pass that makes for lifelong happiness. As the Scrpiture reads, "The path of the just is as a dawning light that shines more and more unto the perfect day." To be just means to have a right sense of values; and for life this means the relation of now to the future. It is this sense of responsibility to the future that makes it possible to rejoice in one's posterity, for

we have shared with them the ideal that develops the ever-rising, growing, and conquering personality. Obviously, therefore, everything is significant. The task well done to-day frees us for better ones to-morrow. Life becomes free from remorse and regrets. If we eat and drink to the glory of God as St. Paul counsels us, we are free from the ill health of to-morrow. We penalize no one (neither spiritually nor physically), and this same relationship holds true in all other phases of life.

People who make their own small affairs and their self-desires the central goal of life are like tops which spin around themselves and then fall flat when the spinning runs down. Those who have the future promises of Jesus as their goal, "Where I am, there ye may be also," find themselves free from the trammels and pulls of their social groups and find an orbit for their life as majestic as that of a star. To be where Jesus is in the future involves living each day according to the life values he shared with us and means that we have only one guidance to follow—the guidance of the Master's voice in our hearts. Such a goal is the glory of the personality which God gave us to lift us up far away from the plane

of animal urges. God give us all the vision of the far horizon.

For Study and Discussion

One of the most important factors in our life is our background. From the past certain culture, tendencies, limitations, and possibilities have been born into us that have largely to do with our success. We are more what those in the past have made us than we suspect. Many of us realize this keenly. Therefore we ought to see to it that those who follow us shall have an inheritance of strength instead of weakness. We cannot measure the influence of what we do now on the future. God has so planned the continuity of our life that we are meant to go from strength to strength even after the present touch of influence has become a matter of the years ago. In planning for careers we ought to take into account what we can do for the world after we have passed on, because values are not temporary but eternal. These values are not things like houses, but qualities of character that are more powerful for the life of those that come after us than mere things can possibly be.

I the Eternal, your God, am a jealous God, punishing children for the sins of their fathers, punishing those who hate me down to the third and fourth gen-

eration, but showing kindness to thousands of those who love me and obey my orders.

—EXODUS 20: 5, 6.

May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, grant you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation for the knowledge of himself, illuminating the eyes of your heart so that you can understand the hope to which He calls us, the wealth of his glorious heritage in the saints, and the surpassing greatness of his power over us believers—a power which operates with the strength of the might which he exalted in raising Christ from the dead.

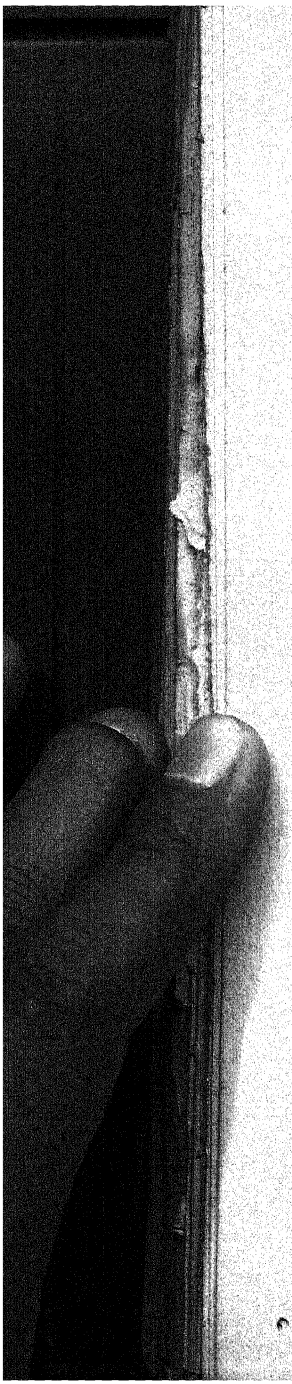
—EPHESIANS 1: 17-20.

It is my prayer . . . that you may be transparent and no harm to anyone in view of the day of Christ, your life covered with that harvest of righteousness which Jesus Christ produces to the glory and the praise of God. —PHILIPPIANS 1: 9-11.

In the quotation from the ten commandments there is no arbitrary God wreaking vengeance on people, but One who states the natural laws of the universe that work as inexorably as any scientific law. If we are so placed in this world, swinging between past and future generations, as the natural law of human life, what is our chief task in deciding what influence we will wield? Can we overcome past inhibitions by spiritual help? If so, what are the chief ones to overcome?

Sometimes a slight influence will turn a whole career in an opposite direction. List some instances you have known where this has been true. How can we be sure we are influencing people in the way of largest life? What is the best way to help the children in our home or school to find their full self-realization? What spiritual principles ought we to emphasize? Jesus did not hesitate to ask people to leave their work and follow him. In what way can we follow his example? What gifts can we give to posterity to-day so that they will rise up and call us blessed?

We thank Thee, our Father, that what we do now abides through the years and brings forth fruit. We thank Thee that we may live so according to the teachings of Christ that we may help our children and friends in after years. Help us to see eternal values in what we do now; and grant us Thy wisdom in all our choices and decisions. As the influence of our Christ has grown through the centuries, so may our life, too, bless those who follow us, and thus know the possibility of an immortal life. Through Jesus Christ, who showed us the way to life. Amen.



CHAPTER XII

COMPENSATIONS OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

EVERY ONE has the right to ask whether the game is worth the tug of war. Do the rewards justify the discipline of mind and spirit needed to win the goal? In the spiritual life, especially, there is a real need to consider values. There is no harder fight in life than is required of anyone who dares to follow the trail of Jesus Christ. What are the rewards? Are they all in the next world or are there real compensations here and now?

It is always well to look to the goal of our adventure. If we know the real value awaiting us, it makes it far easier to endure present hardship. When men knew there was gold to be dug in Alaska, they went through frightful hardships in the bitter cold and snow of the Arctic region with hilarity. Even though food was scarce and friends far away, they pressed on boldly, knowing that some day they would win the treasure. Now, if men can do this for gold, how much more willingly we should do it for our Christ. He not only challenges our loyalty, but points out values that may be ours here and now if we are willing to

make the adventure. He understands that we need the lure of reward. He found it true in his experience. The writer to the Hebrews challenges us to follow Jesus and keep our eye on Him "who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." One only has to listen to the testimony of countless witnesses who can tell us truly that the self-discipline of the spiritual life is a mere nothing compared to the compensations.

What do we actually get? What realities are ours here and now? First among the rewards comes the priceless gift of peace of mind. How rare that is! To know that our Father has us in his keeping and that *"all things* work together for good to them that love God" is better than a million-dollar gift. One can sleep and work and face any change of circumstance without a fear. "O men, how little you trust Him!" exclaimed Jesus to an anxious crowd of men and women with worried faces and only the slenderest margin between them and want. "Look at the birds: your heavenly Father feeds them: are you not of much more value than they?"

It is not only the poor that need this. Our papers give daily accounts of those who take their

lives because they are too cowardly to face life and its testing experiences and changes. Many of these are blessed with ample possessions. They discover that wealth blurs the goal of life because it tempts them to sit down in empty idleness. Handling things is maddening unless there is a goal of real value. A carpenter would go mad if he did nothing but pound nails endlessly into wood. His sanity is kept when there is a goal. He is building a home for himself—a wonderful goal. Or he is building a home for his neighbor and gets a money reward. This brings peace of mind. And a greater peace comes when love and service for Jesus Christ and trust in Divine love are the daily attitude of mind. Then peace of mind is as much a part of us as our breath.

Peace of mind brings health. It reduces our nervous tension, makes the heart beat quietly, and gives good digestion. "Better a little with reverence for the Eternal than large wealth with worry. Better a dish of vegetables with love than the best beef served with hatred; . . . a glad heart helps and heals; a broken spirit saps vitality," says the Wisdom of Solomon. Peace flows from love and trust. We know it in our personal experience. It is also true that peace of mind brings success in our work because it is the quiet mind that sees

the whole perspective. When we are anxious we are like a pool whose waters are so stirred up that they are rough and muddy. They cannot reflect the heavens. When they are quiet they mirror the sky and clouds, also the trees and birds. Our success in work depends on our being able to see everything in relative value and get the vision of the whole. Only the peace of God can keep us. "Trust your affairs to the Eternal, and your plans shall prosper," says the inspired proverb.

Peace is opposed to fear. If we realize how fear affects all our bodily functions and pulls down health, we would make it our chief business to risk everything on the truth of God's love and power to keep us. It widens our influence. A leader is one who has positive faith instead of negative fears. We naturally are attached to those whose faces are turned toward light rather than darkness. The sun draws the flowers toward it; and if the sun of God's love shines in our faces, others are drawn to us. We ask often why it is that people are not attracted to the religious life. The answer is plain. There are so many of us so-called Christians whose faces are lined with anxiety, and fear, and restlessness. People look at us and nothing attracts them. They also say

to themselves that there is nothing effective in religion or we would show it in our lives. Spiritual influence over others comes naturally to one who shows that he understands life and its relation to the love of God and has a compelling confidence and enthusiasm. Every one wants that, and they follow on to discover the secret.

A spiritual life transforms our life from a mere caricature to a fully developed character. This is because we focus upon our loving Lord as the center of all our ambition and purpose. He becomes the great integrator of our personality, and, as the psychologists say, we need to find an integration so that all our powers will grow symmetrically. We all fend to be lopsided and exaggerated in certain respects until we are only a caricature of our real selves. The heart that is centered on Jesus Christ finds ideal growth for every part of human personality; and we become like him in whom nothing but perfection is seen. If we would pray daily, "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us!" our friends would be amazed at the new height, and depth, and breadth, and capacity of mind and spirit which would slowly and steadily become true of us. The enrichment of our personality also comes because our life of trust and peace brings us into close

touch with so many people. Friendship grows naturally from the trusting spirit, and from every friend we gain new riches for our personality. A new power is created when two are one. We work better, we live better, we see more of the beauty of life when we are surrounded by friends. They call out the best in us, and we rise to heights otherwise impossible. The more we are focused on faith, truth, and love, the closer our friends cling to us.

This influence reaches even to the ends of the earth. One cannot be focused on the life of Jesus Christ and not be a world citizen. We love everything and everybody God has created. We find them all interesting. Differences of race, color, language, and background do not stop the flow of your love. It is because we are all different that life is so rich and beautiful. If all the flowers were of one color, we would soon tire of them. It is the variety of color that makes artistic creation possible. How we would miss the beauty of stained-glass windows, paintings, sunsets, gardens, and personal adornment if there was only one color in the world. God had a purpose when he made the human family to differ in its color, tongue, and expression. The truly spiritual person will rejoice in this and make for himself a

glorious rose window of friendship, including all colors and shades. The beauty of a heavenly design will hold us spellbound; and as the light of the Sun of Righteousness makes every color radiant, we will thank God for the glory of the heavenly vision he has given us. International and interracial friendships enrich our personality and free it from the narrowness of a backwoodsman. A cosmopolitan is one who is at home anywhere on earth and among any people.

What a strain on us it will be to enter the world beyond where all the possibilities of a universe await us, if here on earth we have lived really only in one tiny group—and have found our little earth too big for our small hearts. Let us begin to reach to the limits of what is now possible on this earth, so that we shall be able to absorb the vastness of the world beyond. It is not by travel but by having a world-encompassing heart that we discover the whole earth. It then comes trailing to our door.

We think often of Jesus's last words to us before he passed on to the Universal life. He said: "Go and make disciples of all nations, . . . and teach them to obey all the commands I have laid on you, and I will be with you all the time, to the very end of the world." Most of us restrict the

meaning of these words to the cause of "foreign missions," as we say; and think that we have done all that we need to do if we make it possible for some one to go out to the ends of the earth. This ought we to do, but not to leave the greater task undone—to go out in spirit and love ourselves and live the life of Jesus without any prejudice and limits. Many of us will find this hard. We are even suspicious of other groups of Christians who worship in different churches and in different ways from our own. There is a section in our town where we have no acquaintances or friends. We are prejudiced against them. There are neighbors on our own street whom we do not like. How can we follow Jesus Christ unless we walk with him into every heart! It's a big challenge; but if we meet it, we shall find new health, strength, and power; because we shall live, not to ourselves, but to every one for whom Christ died.

The greatest compensation of the spiritual life is the gift of eternal life. Many people have no desire to go on living, because life now is so empty for them that they prefer the sleep of death to living on and on. One man said he could imagine nothing more awful than having to live on endlessly with himself. That was because he himself was the sum total of his ex-

perience. He was the type whom the poet described:

"I lived for myself, I thought for myself,
For myself and none beside,
Just as if Jesus had never lived
And as if he had never died."

Nothing could be more dreary than to have oneself the center of one's cosmos. But when we find our center in Christ and in the hearts of countless friends, then our yearning is to be ever with them and to see Jesus face to face. Life becomes so wide and full that we need an eternity to enter into its fullness. Jesus was so unutterably dear to his disciples that the thought of not seeing him again broke their hearts. He comforted them with these words: "Truly, truly I tell you, he who listens to my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life; he will incur no sentence of judgment, he has already passed from death across to life. . . . If anyone serves me, let him follow me, and where I am, there shall my servant be also." (Moffatt's Translation.)

The bridge from this world to the next is self-forgetting love. If we die to ourselves and live for Christ and others, then, like the grain of wheat which gives itself to death, we shall rise in

a new life, bearing fruit: for love is eternal. As John the beloved disciple writes: "We are children of God now, beloved; what we are to be is not apparent yet, but we do know that when he appears we are to be like him—for we are to see him as he is. And every one who rests this hope on him, purifies himself as he is pure."

For Study and Discussion

To live an earthly life with resources of heavenly power to be as wings to our spirit—what greater compensation can there be than this? It is what Jesus meant when he said that it was expedient for him to go away so that he could come again in the form of the Holy Spirit, who can live in us and empower us. This means that a wisdom beyond our own, a vision beyond our dream, a power beyond human strength, is our resource for all our living, if we obey the guidance of this Spirit. All the compensations of human life grow out of this supreme gift. As St. Paul said, "It is no longer I who live, Christ lives in me; the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself up for me." This means that loneliness and the sense of desertion can never be ours because we have with us always the greatest

Friend and Helper who can never fail. This knowledge means peace, victorious living, and companionship all our days. Those who are willing to follow the teachings of Jesus can have this experience. The wonder is that, in a world where people feel their helplessness, there should be so many who call themselves Christians who have never had this experience. They miss the great reward of the spiritual life. Let us press forward to share the same experience with St. Paul and countless others who have found this the great reality of life.

I will bring the blind upon their way, guiding them by paths they never knew, I will turn darkness into light before them, and the rough places into a plain. This will I do, I promise, I will not leave it undone.

—ISAIAH 42: 16.

I myself will go before you, leveling the mountains, I will shatter doors of bronze, and cut through iron bars; I will give you hidden treasures; secret hoards; for 'tis I the Eternal who call you by name, I the God of Israel. . . . I called you by your name; you know me not, but I delight in you.

—ISAIAH 45: 2-4.

I laid me down to sleep, and this morning I waken, for the Eternal upholds me; I fear not thousands of the foe ranged all around me.

—WORDS OF DAVID: PSALM 3: 5, 6.

There is no doom now for those who are in Christ Jesus; the law of the Spirit brings the life which is in Christ Jesus, and that law has set me free from the law of sin and death. . . . We ourselves, who have the Spirit as a foretaste of the future, even we sigh to ourselves as we wait for the redemption of the body that means our full sonship.

—ROMANS 8: 1, 2, 23.

I am certain neither death nor life, neither angels nor principalities, neither the present nor the future, no powers of the Height or of the Depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to part us from God's love in Christ Jesus our Lord.

—ROMANS 8: 38, 39.

Why is it that with such assurance of the presence and power of God available for us there are so many who are blind to it? What keeps them from proving its reality in their experience? Why do people feel that the spiritual laws of life will inhibit their material success? List the other compensations of the spiritual life in addition to the conscious presence of the Christ within. How do these compensations affect our social relationships? Are people inhibited by a focus on the present without the horizon of the future? What instances have you known of people who suddenly awoke to a need beyond what the present could supply? Does this experience with them bring

a challenge to find the reality of God's presence and power now? In what ways have compensations come to you now from your spiritual experience? What inhibits us from this great adventure?

Our Father, who has stored up for us joys beyond our thought, help us to see the gleams of the glory of the coming day, and press on to the life that is in Thee. Lift us above our weaknesses and stubborn will and help us to become as little children, letting Thee lead us into Thyself. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, who has promised that where He is there we may be also. Amen.

BOOKS TO USE FOR REFERENCE IN DISCUSSION GROUPS

"The Master," by Walter Russell Bowie. Published by Charles Scribner's Sons.

"The Gospel for Main Street," by Charles Reynolds Brown. Published by the Century Company.

"Pathways to Certainty," by Williams Adams Brown. Published by Charles Scribner's Sons.

"The Child's Approach to Religion," by H. W. [illegible]. Published by Richard R. Smith, Inc.

"What's Life All About?" by Bertha Condé. Published by Charles Scribner's Sons.

"Love and the Law of Life," by Toyohiko Kagawa. Published by Winston Company.

"His Glorious Body," by Robert Norwood. Published by Charles Scribner's Sons.

"The Business of Being a Friend," by Bertha Condé. Published by Houghton Mifflin Company.